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America's Strategic Failures

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—From the "Foreword"

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edited by Srdja Trifkovic

featuring chapters by Middle Eastern experts, *Chronicles* editors, and scholars
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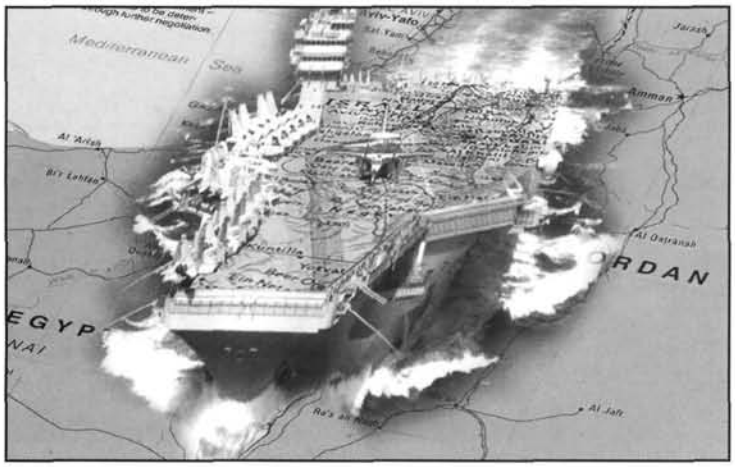

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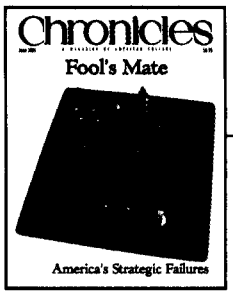

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Dr. Samuel T. Francis

I first met Samuel Francis more than 30 years ago, when he was a graduate student in Chapel Hill and a stalwart member of the Carolina Conservative Society—subsequently, the "Orange County Anti-Jacobin League" when it lost its university recognition on a point of principle. I was a brand-new faculty member, a refugee from Columbia University, and the group's "advisor" (not that they wanted or took any advice). Sam's inimitable personality was already fully formed: gruff, combative, impatient with what he saw as stupidity or timidity, but with an underlying sweetness—yes, sweetness—that he usually kept well hidden. After he left North Carolina, I saw him fairly often in Washington. I recall several dinners at The Palm, surrounded by caricatures of politicians, both the framed and the all-too-living variety. We would argue into the night. Sam regarded me as squishy soft on most matters and didn't hesitate to berate me for it, but we enjoyed sparring with each other almost as much as we enjoyed sharing our contempt for our common adversaries, who were legion. Since the early 90's, I've had few occasions to go to Washington and generally haven't lingered when I went, so I gradually lost touch with Sam, but I kept up with what he was writing (and often argued with him in my mind). I always assumed that one of these days we would pick up where we left off. I now bitterly regret his loss, and my lost opportunities. I will miss him.

—John Shelton Reed
Chapel Hill, NC

Sam was brilliant and courageous and is irreplaceable. Despite his great knowledge of Machiavellian political thinkers, Sam's writing was anything but Machiavellian. He was not interested in writing to advance an agenda, much less an agenda devoted to self-promotion. What interested Sam was truth, and what motivated his writing was a desire to tell the truth as he saw it, regardless of the consequences to himself.

Sam was also a wonderful friend. Talking with Sam was always a treat. His knowledge was vast, ranging from a profound grasp of history and political theory, to an amazing familiarity with the many strands of American conservatism, to a keen appreciation of good books and movies. He also possessed as dry and fine a wit as anyone I have ever known. He will be missed.

—Tom Piatak
Strongsville, OH

Since the death of Sam Francis, the world has lost a voice of singular brilliance and clarity. I have always feared getting into a debate with him, but I will miss the acuity with which he delivered his blows against political foolishness and moral deceit.

—Harold O.J. Brown
Charlotte, NC

Sam was indeed a gentleman of the old school and capable of great courtesy as well as gruffness and bluntness. I always appreciated his kindness to me, and I admired his strength of character, which was evident in many ways. He was also very funny, and I can remember him clearly, sitting in the midst of a group of *Chronicles* editors, surprisingly attentive to his lengthening cigarette ash as he waved it above his host's carpet, making witty observations that were both bleak and accurate.

I am about 15 years younger than he was, and I have long felt that Sam was one of a group of men who, whatever their respective faults, have a combination of abilities and qualities that people my age or younger do not have. So to lose his knowledge and clarity and decency seems a very great loss, and larger than a personal one.

—Katherine Dalton Boyer
New Castle, KY

Sam Francis was one of my heroes. I think of myself as his student, as someone who benefited immeasurably from the writings of a man who never backed away from telling the truth. I'm certain there are a lot of Sam's readers who feel the same way. I am fortunate to have known him. He was a genuine patriot and a first-class intellect. The real America has lost a true son and champion. Goodbye, Sam; we'll miss you. May the

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Good Lord bless and keep you; may He make His face to shine upon you and give you peace.

—Wayne Allensworth
Keller, TX

Although I had known about his grave condition and had tried unsuccessfully to visit Sam the day before his passing, the news of his death shook me deeply. Sam was one of my closest personal friends, and, during my years in Washington, my wife and children had viewed him as a family member. What seemed his solitary nature concealed a fearless heart and a devastating wit, which helped turn him into a brilliant, courageous journalist. May our longtime comrade-in-arms dwell in the house of the Lord forever!

—Paul Gottfried
Elizabethtown, PA

Sam and I corresponded regularly from 1992 up until a few short months ago, and I enjoyed his company at John Randolph Club functions and similar get-togethers. I remember the standing ovation he received just by walking into a room at the Soldiers and Sailors Club in Manhattan, where he was to give a talk. It was a thrill for me to receive a letter through mail or e-mail from a writer I so admired. In reading numerous testimonials, I notice that other people felt the same way. If you wrote Sam, he'd find time to return the favor. Both Thomas Jefferson and Robert E. Lee, in their final years, wrote one return letter after another to total strangers.

Sam figured prominently in three of my books. I chose his 1992 essay "Nationalism, Old and New" to close out my 1999 collection, *The Paleoconservatives*. That pretty much says it all. I can only add that reading Sam's column in *Chronicles*—not just for its worldview but for its manly prose—gave me the same pleasure as does a passage from William Faulkner or Thomas Wolfe or Andrew Lytle. He was that great a writer.

—Joseph Scotchie
New York, NY

I was shocked to hear about Samuel Francis's death. It looked for a while as if he would pull through; and then this happens. What a terrible loss to us all.

His passing deprives us of one of America's most courageous and funniest writers. How I wish I'd met him more than once. (We did exchange the occasional cordial e-mail and telephone call.) I am glad to have confirmed my suspicion that underneath his irascibility was a good deal of sensitivity, not to mention downright timidity.

Every writer who read Dr. Francis's work realized that here was a master stylist, witty, opulent, and devastating. However much one might try to achieve a Francis-like idiom, the feat was impossible. He could be neither emulated nor even adequately mimicked, because *le style, c'était l'homme*. At least he retained his formidable authorial skills to the last. If his hand had forgotten its literary cunning, he would, I should think, have found that unbearable.

—R.J. Stove
Melbourne, Australia

I didn't know Sam Francis as well as I would have liked to, but he and I had several long talks together and some correspondence at different times over the last seven or eight years of his life. I have very fond memories of those conversations and the impish gleams that so often crept into Sam's eyes just before he delivered himself of some delightful anecdote or *aperçu*.

Apart from our shared political interests, we were both slightly shamefaced aficionados of horror-story writers such as M.R. James, H.P. Lovecraft, and Sheridan Le Fanu and had a wistful admiration for that numinous world of ivy-clad vicarages, fog-bound English country houses, and haunted churches. Yet, while I was content just to read the stories, Sam had researched into the writers, the stories they wrote, and their sociopolitical context—perhaps more than these rather lightweight subjects merited. But such intellectual curiosity and thoroughness was characteristic of the man. Without ever becoming embittered or cynical, he took nothing on trust but would always cut to the quick, whether discussing Vathek, immigration, the Tudors, or revolutions from the middle. Without being bombastic or self-satisfied, he was someone perfectly prepared to suffer for his principles and for his art. Nor did he bear grudges against those who had behaved so contemptibly toward him. His print lacerations of those who had attacked him, although cutting, were never ill judged or unmanly and were antiseptic rather than poisonous—which is more than can be said about the streams of bile that flowed in his direction from those who hoped that, by denouncing him, they might themselves escape attack.

Even from a trans-Atlantic perspective, I can see that his death (how ironic that he should have suffered this heart trouble despite his resolute and highly effective weight-loss program) has deprived the American right (and, for that matter, the Western world) of one of its most distinctive and eloquent voices and left a gaping hole at the heart of many worthwhile enterprises and publications, not least *Chronicles*. Such gaps can never be filled completely, but he has mercifully left a corpus of insightful and invaluable work that can and will help inspire similarly doughty Westerners in the future. He would have smiled at the sentiment and demurred at the compliment, but the fact remains that he was—and will remain—a noble example to all who value what he valued.

—Derek Turner
London, England

I was deeply saddened to learn of Samuel Francis's sudden death. Although I haven't met or known him personally, his brilliant essays were well known to me.

His views and comments on conservatism, religion, and current culture-war issues were both valuable and impressive, and one could get to know his character through them. Dr. Francis's death is a great loss, and he will be missed by his colleagues and friends, as well as his readers. Let me express my sincere sympathy.

—Vladimir Palko
Minister of the Interior
Slovak Republic

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by Srdja Trifkovic

Aid and Comfort to the Enemy

According to an April 2 report published by *Intelligence Online*, for some months now, Washington has been putting out feelers to various Islamic activists who spearhead the opposition to the Syrian regime. According to this source, American diplomats are also cultivating contacts in Qatar with TV preacher Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, "with whom they frequently discuss the Syrian question." The Americans are said to be supported in this endeavor by the British, as evidenced by the Blair government's approval of the sheikh's visit to London last July. "The Americans are counting on Qaradawi to help them bring together the moderate elements of the Moslem Brotherhood in Syria," the report concludes, while the Saudi and Jordanian governments prefer to see a Sunni regime come to power in Syria as a counter to the growing Shiite influence in Iraq and Lebanon.

The veracity of this report needs to be confirmed, but, as Leon Hadar points out, "it doesn't sound crazy if you take into consideration the current U.S. alliance with the pro-Iran Shiite fundamentalist parties in Iraq." The Iraqi scenario entailed replacing an unpleasant secularist autocrat with Ayatollah Sistani's people. And, to bring down Bashar al-Assad—another secularist autocrat who presents no threat to America—we are now cultivating some allegedly "moderate elements" of the Muslim Brotherhood.

I do not know whether to laugh or to cry. Any Islamist alternative to Assad would certainly prove far more detrimental to American interests than the *status quo*. Furthermore, today's Syria presents a diplomatic realist with many creative possibilities. Assad and the old guard he has inherited are nervous and keen to make a deal with Washington if they are left in peace. They have removed most of their soldiers from Lebanon, and the eventual completion of that withdrawal is not in doubt. They have signaled repeatedly that they are ready for concessions, most recently when Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer came to Damascus on April 13. It is rumored that they may even accept a peace treaty with Israel and let her keep some parts of Golan "on lease," if Syria is removed from Mr. Bush's list of rogue states. Syrian diplomats point out that their country has never been guilty of a terrorist outrage comparable to Lockerbie, and yet Libya's Qaddafi—having done his penance—has been allowed back into polite society.

In the last years of his father's life, Assad had emerged as an advocate of modernization and economic reform. After coming to power in June 2000, he has released hundreds of political prisoners and allowed the first independent newspapers for more than three decades to begin publishing. Syria's economy is being opened up, with plans for private banks for the first time in decades. In brief, Syria seems much better poised for the sort of domestic transformation that would be in line with Mr. Bush's vision of a democratic Middle East than, say, Saudi Arabia is.

By contrast, the quest for a "moderate" variety of the Muslim Brotherhood is absurd. The Muslim Brotherhood is an organization based on a simple credo: *Allah is our objective. The Prophet is our leader. The Koran is our law.* Jihad *is our way. Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope.* It was founded in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna, an Egyptian schoolteacher nurtured on Wahhabism, as an Islamic revivalist movement that opposed the ascendancy of secular and Western ideas in the Middle East. The Brotherhood advocated a return to integral Islam as a solution to the ills that had befallen Muslim societies; this program was embodied in the Party of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb Al-Ikhwan Al-Muslimoon. It blamed the Egyptian government for being too soft on Israel and started performing terrorist acts in Egypt, which led to a ban on its activities. An Ikhwani tried to assassinate Egyptian President Nasser in 1954, and four others succeeded in killing Anwar al-Sadat in September 1981.

Today, the Brotherhood has branches in every traditionally Muslim country and all over the world, including the United States. Some minor regional differences notwithstanding, they all share the same long-term goal: the establishment of a worldwide Islamic state. They all believe that the Koran justifies violence to overthrow un-Islamic governments, and they all call for the destruction of Israel and see America as a sworn enemy.

Al-Qaradawi, far from being a "moderate," is a mainstream Brother. His Ikhwani affiliations led to his imprisonment in Egypt in 1949, then in 1954-56, and again in 1962. For some years, Al-Qaradawi has been a media superstar in the Arab world, thanks mainly to his regular program *Al-Shariaa wa Al-Haya* (*Islamic Law and Life*) on Al Jazeera. His comments on social, political, moral, and sexual issues enjoy a popularity and authority that could be replicated here only by blending Oprah and Billy Graham. His call for Muslims to fight Americans (whether troops or civilians) in Iraq—because they are occupiers and fighting them is a religious duty—carries special weight.

During the Cold War, Washington routinely pandered to various Islamists as a means of weakening secular Arab nationalist regimes. In the mid 1950's, the White House even promoted the idea of forming an Islamic bloc, led by Saudi Arabia, to counter Nasserism. To his peril, Sadat freed dozens of Ikhwanis to help him deal with opposition in his own ranks (and, in that same period, Israel backed Islamists, including Hamas in the West Bank, to challenge Arafat and the PLO).

Such policies reflect either an impressive degree of stupidity or a naiveté not normally associated with the policymaking community. To any sane person, the lesson of American involvement in Afghanistan after 1979 should have been that militant Islam cannot be turned into a tool of policy. *Blowback* is the apt metaphor: The strategy of effective support for Islamic ambitions in pursuit of short-term political or military objectives of the United States has helped turn Islamic radicalism into a truly global phenomenon detrimental to U.S. ideals and interests.

If those brilliant minds advocating Chechnya's independence, Bosnia's centralization under Izetbegovic's heirs, Kosovo's "sovereignty" under the KLA, and Al-Qaradawi's disciples at the helm in Damascus are neither idiots nor innocents, the only reasonable conclusion is that they *want* to create new hotbeds of Islamic radicalism in order to justify their quest for global hegemony and hasten the destruction of Christianity. ◁

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IRAQ'S CHRISTIANS may be on their way to extinction, thanks to the Bush administration's decision to topple Saddam Hussein's regime. Today, Iraq's mostly Catholic and Orthodox Christians are fleeing the country, with their destination of choice being, ironically, Syria, another target for "regime change" on the neoconservative hit list.

More than two years ago, *Chronicles* readers were made aware of the threat to Iraq's Christians posed by the Bush administration's determination to overturn Saddam's regime: As the White House geared up for war, this author wrote that the administration seemed "willing to sacrifice" Iraq's Christians in order to bring down Saddam. There was widespread apprehension among Iraqi Christians at the time. War and the end of the Ba'ath regime in Baghdad might well, many Iraqi Christians warned, unleash the Islamic forces that Saddam had largely held in check. In fact, the secular Ba'ath regime was hated by the Islamists, including Osama bin Laden, in part because of its relative tolerance toward the Christian community. With the political brakes off, the warnings of Islamic attacks on the country's 800,000 Christians came true, and the attacks appear to be escalating.

In August 2004, five churches in Baghdad and four in Mosul were attacked on the same day. The attacks killed 12 and signaled that the Muslim blows against Christians were becoming systematic. On the first day of the Muslim celebration of Ramadan last October, five churches were attacked. In November, two church bombings killed eight Christians. At the same time, Christians have been targeted for kidnapping; their businesses have been destroyed (Christians own and operate liquor stores, among other enterprises; these, in particular, have been the targets of Islamic attacks); and their women have been forced to wear the Muslim veil. As reported in the *Washington Times*, many Christian university students, fearing for their lives, have stopped attending classes. Iraq's Christians celebrated Christmas at home last year, as priests warned believers off from Midnight Mass at their parish churches. As cited by the *Washington Times*' Arnold Beichman, the patriarch of Babylon, Emmanuel III, felt "pained" by "the destruction of our people, resources, buildings, and churches. We grieve over the tragic death of many of our children and the injuries and psychological shocks suffered by others."

Stories of attacks, kidnappings, and murders of Iraqi Christians have become commonplace. As one Iraqi Christian refugee in Syria told the *New York Times*, he had hoped that the Americans' promises of "liberation" might come true, but "our suffering has only increased." "Saddam didn't allow for people to incite" religious violence, Solaka Enweya told the *Times*, but, in U.S.-occupied Iraq, "we Christians have suffered so much" that "our only choice is to leave for Syria." The refugee stream continues, though some Iraqi Christian church leaders have called for their flock to stay and preserve one of Christianity's oldest communities. Whatever their views of the United States or their relations with the occupation authorities, however, both Sunni and Shiite Muslims have identified all Christians with the West, the United States, and the occupation.

If Iraqi Christians expected any help—or even sympathy—from the historically Christian United States, they have been bitterly disappointed. Anthony Browne of the *Spectator* recently wrote that, "Two years and many church attacks later, Iraq may still be occupied by Christian foreign powers, but the Islamist plan to ethnically [*sic*] cleanse Iraq . . . is reaching fruition." Browne, who describes himself as a "liberal democrat atheist," stated flatly that "Muslims stick up for their co-religionists," something that Christians largely fail to do. Dr. Patrick Sookhdeo of the Barnabas Trust, which aids persecuted Christians, told Browne that "The Muslims have an Ummah [the worldwide Muslim community]," whereas Christians no longer have Christendom. There is "no Christian country that says 'We are Christian and we will help Christians.'"

With Shiite Muslims being the conspicuous winners in the Iraqi elections, perhaps the Bush administration should reconsider just what "regime change" and democracy could mean in Middle Eastern states. Derek Hoffman, writing in *Christianity Today*, clues us in: "Throughout the Middle East," wrote Hoffman, "whenever Islamist parties have stood for election they have usually won. And they are becoming more popular." The likely outcome of overturning regimes in places such as Iraq and Syria seems obvious: "Democracy" in the Middle East probably means the installation of Islamic regimes that will not only persecute Christians but act as staging grounds for the further spread of militant Islam.

Meanwhile, as the Bush White House targets Syria, a haven for Iraq's dwindling Christian community, it remains remarkably tolerant of Saudi Arabia, a country that the *Spectator*'s Browne condemned as "the global fountain of religious bigotry," a state that fiercely persecutes Christians. U.S. ally Pakistan is no better. President Bush's most fervent supporters, blinkered by a dispensationalist "end-times" theology that eclipses the Gospel's message of Salvation, don't seem to care, assuming they have been thoughtful enough to question what is happening to their fellow Christians in the first place. Maybe these are, indeed, the end times—first and foremost for any remaining vestige of the idea of Christendom and, perhaps, for the ancient Christian communities of the Middle East.

—*Wayne Allensworth*

THE "SCANDAL" surrounding House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-TX) has all the earmarks of a Washington feeding frenzy—which means, in short, that most ordinary Americans couldn't care less. Financial shenanigans in the Imperial City? I'm shocked, I tell you—*shocked*! Yet there is a lesson here, albeit not the one the Democrats and other "good government" schoolmarms are wont to draw.

We are told that DeLay had hired members of his family to work on his campaigns. You might argue that this should be illegal, but it isn't. They all do it, as the *Los Angeles Times* pointed out: "At least 39 members of Congress have engaged in the controversial practice of paying their spouses, children or other relatives out of campaign funds, or have hired companies in which a family member had a financial interest, records and interviews show. House campaign funds have paid more than $3 million to lawmakers' relatives over the last two election cycles, records show."

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Next up is the trip to Russia that DeLay took, paid for by the National Center for Public Policy Research, which, the *Washington Post* assures us, "was underwritten by business interests lobbying in support of the Russian government, according to four people with firsthand knowledge of the trip arrangements."

DeLay avers that he thought his trip was underwritten by the Center—which would make it perfectly legal—but the *Post* insists that the junket was financed by "a mysterious company registered in the Bahamas that also paid for an intensive $440,000 lobbying campaign." *Newsweek* is reporting that DeLay knew about these arrangements; DeLay denies it.

So it all boils down to dreary technicalities; the larger point, however, is this: These junkets are legal as long as the money is funneled through a nonprofit front group. DeLay went on his trip to Russia in 1997; that same year, the educational arm of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) paid for trips to Israel for 34 members of Congress. Every two years, AIPAC offers each new member of Congress a trip to Israel for a week to ten days. No one has said boo about it—and they won't. It's all part of the woof and warp of life for a Washington lawmaker.

In 1997, the year of DeLay's alleged transgression, Rep. Tom Lantos (D-CA), a major force on the International Relations Committee, went on 13 overseas junkets to seven countries. *Congressional Quarterly* quipped that "Lantos' disclosure form resembles an airline flight schedule, with trips to Jordan, Ukraine, Israel and several to Lantos' native Hungary. The trips were funded by a variety of groups, including Israeli organizations."

The big problem for DeLay is that his journey to Muscovy benefited the wrong country. Russia, these days, is politically incorrect: Putin, we are told, is the New Stalin, and his country, which has not been complacent as the United States encircles her with color-coded *coup d'etats*, is on the neocons' list of nations that need to be put in their proper place—*i.e.*, on bended knee before the U.S. hegemon.

The Russian lobby in Washington sought to retain funding for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (one of those "public-private" corporate-welfare schemes that funnel federal tax dollars into politically favored businesses), and they wined and dined their way into DeLay's good graces. How is this different from AIPAC shuttling newly elected members of Congress to Israel, all expenses paid, so that the Jewish state continues to scarf up the single-largest portion of our "foreign aid" budget?

Much is being made of the presence of two registered lobbyists for Russian interests on the 1997 trip, one of whom, Jack Abramoff, is at the center of an investigation into improper influence peddling. AIPAC, however, does not have to register as an agent of a foreign power, although the two recent FBI raids on its Washington headquarters would seem to suggest otherwise.

As long as we insist on lording it over the whole world, supplicants will stream to the seat of power in Washington and buy up as many of our "leaders" as they can afford. "They all do it" is not a moral defense, but then again, I am not defending "The Hammer," as a person or as a political leader: I am merely pointing out that DeLay's corruption is the corruption of empire.

—*Justin Raimondo*

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at

The Hard Right Book Club

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POPE BENEDICT XVI, in an appeal to the sheep newly his own on the day of his enthronement, said, "Pray for me that I may not flee for fear of the wolves." We can be sure he knows who these wolves are after a quarter-century as head of the Holy Office.

Here are some of his words directed at the wolves. First, to the wolves outside the Church: On May 13, 2004, he gave a conference to the Senate of the Italian Republic in the chapter room of the Minerva in which he provided an overview of the "irrefutably Christian"—words from his first general audience as Pope—past, present, and *future* of Europe. "In our current society . . . those who dishonor the faith of Israel, its image of God, its great figures [are] fined. Whoever degrades the Koran and the convictions of Islam is fined as well. However, wherever one treats of Christ and what is sacred to Christians then suddenly freedom of opinion appears as the supreme good . . . There is a strange self-hatred in the West which could be considered something pathological; the West tries to open itself to the understanding of values from the outside, but it no longer loves itself . . . The multiculturalism which is constantly and passionately encouraged and favored is often above all abandonment and denial of that which is one's own, a flight from one's own things."

Second, to the wolves within the Church: On March 25, 2005, Cardinal Ratzinger gave the meditations on the *Via Crucis* at the Colosseum in Rome. "How often is His Word twisted and misused! What little faith is present behind so many theories, so many empty words! How much filth there is in the Church, and even among those who, in the priesthood, ought to belong entirely to Him! . . . His betrayal by His disciples, their unworthy reception of His Body and Blood, is certainly the greatest suffering endured by the Redeemer; it pierces His heart. We can only call to Him from the depths of our hearts: *Kyrie eleison*."

Now, some words for sheep—first, the laity: At the end of the Liturgical Conference at the abbey of Fontgombault on July 24, 2001, he spoke (along with Roberto de Mattei, a friend of *Chronicles* and The Rockford Institute) of the difficult but necessary truth that authentic, traditional liturgy can only be successfully restored in an objective, local context and not by a gathering of persons motivated simply by subjective, ideological forms. "I am in *this* local Church, and I don't look for my friends there, I find my brothers and my sisters; and these brothers and sisters are not people we look for[;] we just find them there[;] . . . this is a very important principle[;] . . . this is not my choice[;] . . . I am in the common Church, along with the poor, the wealthy, with people I like and people I don't like, with intellectuals and with uneducated people; I am in the Church which *was there before me*."

Now, for religious: In the same speech in the old cloister of the Minerva cited above, he indicated the necessity of monastics for the survival of culture. "Monasticism . . . has *remained* the essential bearer of cultural continuity, and above all of the fundamental religious and moral values and of the ultimate destiny of man, and insofar as it is a force which is pre- and supra-political, it is also the bearer of the ever necessary rebirths." The new pope's insistence on the main-

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tenance of tradition in the concrete, local reality of faith and worship, family and monastery, is as good news in Rockford as it is in Rome. Small wonder that the Russian Orthodox bishop-representative to the European Union, Hilarion Alfeyev, in an interview given in Rome, invited the new Pope on his enthronement day to a new alliance, not dedicated to ecumenical dialogue but to cultural action in the "noble, but extremely painful and difficult combat . . . against secularism, liberalism, and relativism."

How the Holy Father will go about this work of defense and restoration depends, as it did for Cephas, on how God's grace uses his temperament and character, which means, above all, his cultural formation. This being the case, we should be very hopeful indeed, for these are Benedict XVI's words about his childhood from an earlier interview as cited by the almost always reliable *Sandro Magister*: "The Catholicism of the Bavaria in which I grew up was joyful, colorful, human. I miss a sense of purism. This must be because, since my childhood, I have breathed the air of the Baroque." From this and all the above, I infer this practical and hopeful resolution for the reader: Attending The Rockford Institute's 2005 Summer School with its Romantic Counterrevolutionary theme will be a great way to inaugurate the program of the pontificate of *Papa Ratzinger* and fight what he called, in a conference given in 1999 in—of all places!—Northern California, *die Verdummung durch Unglauben* ("dumbing-down through unbelief") brought down on us by the Enlightenment. Then, you'll be ready to help when, God willing, the German Romantic *brio* of this Pontiff confronts "the dark Satanic mills" of the contemporary West.

—*Hugh Barbour, O.Praem.*

Scott P. Richert

(Clockwise) Roger McGrath, James Moses, Aaron Wolf, Srdja Trifkovic, Thomas Fleming, and Wayne Allensworth at the Menger Hotel, San Antonio, Texas, November 9, 2004.

JAMES W. MOSES, R.I.P. The passing of James Moses, after a long battle with cancer, is sad news for many in the *Chronicles* circle. Jim was an occasional contributor to *Chronicles*, a John Randolph Club member, and a longtime foot soldier in Old Right causes.

A native of northern New Jersey, Jim was a graduate of the legendary Bergen County Catholic High School and of Columbia University, where he wrote his senior thesis on John Randolph of Roanoke, a portent of things to come. Throughout the 1980's and 90's, he was involved in New Jersey politics, working as a speechwriter and consultant to several candidates, including such stalwart conservatives as Jerry Cardinale and John Scott.

As with many paleoconservatives, Jim, by the early 80's, had become disillusioned with both Republican Party politics and the drift of the conservative movement. In 1988, he bypassed the candidacies of George H.W. Bush, Bob Dole, and Jack Kemp, supporting, instead, Delaware Gov. Pierre DuPont.

Above all, Jim was a loyal Buchananite. In both 1992 and 1996, he traveled to New Hampshire to do volunteer work for the Buchanan campaign, sleeping in dormitories and manning the phones in that state and, later on, several others. Also with many paleos, Jim thought that Buchanan should have made a third-party run in 1996, when he still had considerable nationwide momentum. Either way, Pat Buchanan was Jim's political hero. He also valued his friendships with *Chronicles* staff members and was thrilled to have his byline in this publication.

At the time of his death, Jim worked for the City of New York's Finance Department, having served under both the Bloomberg and Giuliani administrations. While he was happy to write for *Chronicles* and other Old Right publications, he also worried that a byline in such reactionary journals might get him in trouble with his superiors. That's the nature of being a traditionalist in New York, where Republicans are generally to the left of Bill Clinton.

Jim Moses was a Christian gentleman of the first order, a man of the West who did the Lord's work in the Devil's city.

—*Joe Scotchie*

OBITER DICTA: Mark your calendar: The 16th Annual Meeting of the **John Randolph Club**, "Small Is Beautiful: The Culture and Politics of the Human Scale," will be held in Charleston, South Carolina, December 9-10. The meeting will be preceded by a three-day Convivium celebrating the history and literature of Charleston and South Carolina, beginning the evening of December 7. Watch future issues of *Chronicles*, visit *ChroniclesMagazine.org*, or call **Christopher Check** at (815) 964-5811 for more information.

Our poet this month is **David Middleton**. Dr. Middleton, the poet-in-residence at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana, is poetry editor for the *Classical Outlook* (University of Georgia) and the *Anglican Theological Review*. His books of verse include *The Burning Fields* (1991) and *Beyond the Chandeleurs* (1999), both from LSU Press.

Our cover and interior art is provided by our designer, **Melanie Anderson**. Mrs. Anderson received her B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University.

Additional interior art is provided by **Elizabeth Wolf** of Chicago. Miss Wolf received her B.F.A. from the School of Art at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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by Thomas Fleming

The Suicide Strategy of the West

Americans, it has been observed, have little or no strategic sense. *Strategy*, as any schoolboy used to know, comes from a Greek word meaning "generalship" in the broad sense of the art of "projecting and directing" (OED) a campaign as opposed to the tactical abilities needed to marshal men on the battlefield. The American can-do approach makes us great tacticians, whether in business, in scholarship, or in foreign policy. Show us whom to kill, what dissertation topic to tackle, or what regime to topple, and we can do the job effectively, but ask us to consider all the consequences of a war, grasp an historical period in its fullness, or develop a long-range plan for dealing with the Islamic world, and too many of us act like the spoiled corporate executives whose concern for the company is limited to the quarterly earnings statements that determine their compensation.

Donald Rumsfeld, to take only one example, appears to be a superb tactician, both in business and in the Department of Defense, but his hopeless ignorance of history and foreign affairs, combined with his apparent inability to think beyond the end of the fighting, has not served us especially well in Iraq. When the insurgency sputters out, as it will inevitably, and Iraqi politicians can go into the bazaar and pretend to believe one another's lies long enough to form a makeshift government, the problems we have created for ourselves will have only begun.

The hopelessness of American strategic thinking has been on gaudy display in our approach to Islamic insurgencies in the Balkans. In Bosnia and Kosovo, neoconservatives and neoliberals showed their determination to back Osama bin Laden and his allies in their campaign to restore Islamic rule. And just as leading neoconservatives formed a committee to support the Islamic terrorists in Bosnia, the Podhoretzes, Bill Kristol, Richard Perle & Co. are now leading a committee that supports the Islamic terrorists in Chechnya. They—and the administration they are leading by the nose—are also keen on Turkey's entrance into the European Union, a subject that has provoked little discussion and no debate within the small cadre of politicians who rule the nearly 300 million helots who pay their salaries.

Turkey's defenders insist that she is an ally of the United States—and Israel—and, while not perfect, the Turkish government is a shining example of democracy in the Middle East. Most Americans accept this argument because they know only two things about modern Turkey: first, that she is a secular state, a bulwark against Islamism; second, that she is a nationalist state, the very opposite of the Ottoman Empire. There once was some truth in both assertions; today, however, they are more false than true. The ruling party of Prime Minister Erdogan, the Justice and Development Party (known by its Turkish acronym AK) is explicitly Islamist, though the prime minister himself has learned to moderate his rhetoric since 1998 when he was sentenced to ten months in prison for reading an inflammatory Islamic poem containing the lines "The mosques are our barracks, the domes our helmets, the minarets our bayonets and the faithful our soldiers . . . "

Erdogan's critics wonder if his newfound "moderation" reflects a change of heart, as opposed to a tactic aimed at pleasing the power behind the government—namely, the military. But, while the old-guard generals are still hewing to the secular line, many younger officers are not immune to the lure of the old religion. Not long ago, I spoke with a teacher in a school for officers' children. The school, naturally, did not acknowledge Islamic holidays, but, nonetheless, a high proportion of students always managed to become ill on those days so that they could stay home.

The AK is a moderately nationalist party, but this does not preclude an ambition to restore the glories of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire has been gone since World War I, but it is hard to have a conversation with a Turkish political intellectual without hearing something like this: "Of course, nobody wants to restore the Ottoman Empire, but, I must confess, we knew how to rule the Arabs, and, under Ottoman rule, the turbulent Balkans were quiet." Imagine if a German politician were to say, "Now, I don't want to restore the Third Reich, but Hitler showed the French a thing or two and really kept the Jews in line."

The Ottoman Empire's vast complex of provinces stretching from North Africa to Budapest will never be rebuilt—not in the Middle East and not in Europe. Ever since the peoples of the Balkans expelled them, however, many Turks have dreamed of returning to Europe, either to get back the property they had stolen or, at least, to become a player on the Continent. Now, thanks to pressure from the United States and the stupidity of the leaders of the European Union, this dream may soon be realized.

The general dangers of including Turkey in Europe should be obvious to anyone: It brings the European frontier into the Middle East; it exposes all of Europe to a flood of Anatolian immigrants and legitimates the Islamization of Germany and France; and, by including a country whose Third World economy and level of education make Greece and Portugal seem like Germany, it threatens the jobs and economic stability of the entire Continent.

Those are serious enough reasons to oppose Turkish entrance into the European Union, but there is another, far more serious threat that post-Christian Europe does not wish to consider. Despite the secular Western veneer, Turkey remains a brutally repressive state that routinely persecutes Christians and is a source of anti-Christian terrorism. Since the Young Turk revolution led by Mustafa Kemal, Turkey has officially been a secular state, but that official move did not change the religious identity of the Turkish people, nor did it ameliorate the brutality of Turkish policy.

Since her establishment, Turkey has been a notorious violator of what are called "human rights": Non-Turks have been periodically subjected to murder and ethnic cleansing; the press is censored, publications are shut down or destroyed, and journalists and opposition leaders are beaten and murdered. In March, an International Women's Day demonstration in Ankara was suppressed by a squad of police who beat, bludgeoned, and kicked the misguided women. As little as we may sympathize with

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international feminism, women have it particularly difficult in Turkey, where they are forbidden both the equal rights enforced in Western states *and* the right to wear religious clothing in government buildings—a law that effectively deprives Muslim women of their civil rights. And I do not know what to make of the justice minister's blanket statement that the Turkish police, like police everywhere, "have the right to use violence."

Despite a provision for religious liberty in the Turkish constitution, the government of Turkey has done everything it can to make the work of the Orthodox patriarchate difficult, if not impossible. Orthodox Greeks have been persecuted to the extent that only a handful are left throughout Turkey—only 20,000 in 1995, fewer still today. This ethnic cleansing, which has been going on continuously, is accomplished by a number of means, including discriminatory tax rates, confiscation of property, and the government's refusal to protect Christians from the periodic pogroms that have broken out. From this tiny Greek remnant, it is very hard to recruit more than a few priests. Nonetheless, the government insists that the patriarch must be a Turkish citizen. Imagine if the Italian government passed a law saying that only an Italian citizen could be pope.

In 1971, the government closed the patriarchate's seminary in Chalke and, in 1975, shut down the Church's printing press. Turkey has also been putting her greedy hands on the Church's property through various sorts of legal chicanery. In 1964, a secret law was passed stripping Greeks of the right to transfer property, invalidating gifts made to the Church by wealthy Greek businessmen who had to flee Turkey.

Turkey has also taken more direct measures to reduce the scope and importance of the Greek Orthodox Church: murder and mayhem. If we set aside the terrible events that followed World War I and concentrate only on what has happened since the end of World War II, there is still a dismal record of oppression, such as the events of September 6, 1955, when, in only six hours, a mob organized by government agents succeeded in destroying thousands of Greek shops, homes, schools, and all of the Greek newspapers in Turkey, or the brutal period of 1963-64, when the government forced the expulsion of 48,000 Greeks.

Anti-Christian fanatics are free to stage riots outside the patriarchate with scarcely any intervention from the police, and, last October, someone lobbed a bomb into the patriarch's residence. Srdja Trifkovic and I had interviewed Patriarch Bartholomew not a year before that bombing. He was both diplomatic and irenic, but he was also frank in explaining the impossible circumstances in which he found himself—unable even to protect, much less restore, some of the most ancient monuments in Christendom.

Turkey naturally supported the Muslim takeover of Bosnia and the NATO bombing that supported them, just as she later supported the illegal U.S.-led attack on Yugoslavia in support of the Albanian Muslim terrorists in Kosovo. There was dissension among some Turkish politicians, who insisted that NATO did not do enough in bombing the Serbs. Turkish volunteers also played a prominent part in the terror campaigns against Christians in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Turkey's support for terrorists in the Balkans is indirect, but the same cannot be said for the government's actions on Cyprus, part of which it has occupied since 1974. During the invasion, about 200,000 Greek Cypriots were expelled from their homes, and, in 30 years of occupation, Turks have carried out exactly the same policies of terrorism and repression that characterized the later days of the Ottoman Empire: 500 churches have been destroyed, looted, or desecrated; over 40 have been turned into mosques.

The West's failure to resist the tide of Islamic terrorism is not a new story. When Mehmed II conquered Constantinople in 1453, he was encouraged by Renaissance intellectuals to think of himself as the emperor of the entire Roman world. He planned to make good on his claim by taking over what was left of Serbia, eliminating Hungary as a threat, seizing control of Albania and the Dalmatian Coast, from which he apparently intended to launch an invasion of Italy. If ever the West faced a threat, this was it.

To conquer Hungary, though, Mehmed would have to subjugate what was left of Serbia and take control of the Danube, which was guarded by the Hungarian-held fortress of Belgrade. He vowed that he would storm the citadel, conquer Hungary in two months, and eat his dinner peacefully in Buda. By the spring of 1456, Western leaders knew he was preparing a major expedition.

Sadly, the great crusading powers of Western Europe—England, France, the Holy Roman Empire, the greatest Italian states—were either not interested or actively collaborating with the Turk. England and France were just mopping up after the Hundred Years' War, and France, even when she regained her strength and confidence, preferred to make a deal with the sultan. In the 16th century, François I made his infamous alliance with Sultan Suleyman against Emperor Charles V. France would aid the sultan in the conquest of Austria by simultaneously attacking. As a reward, France would receive Northern Italy, while Southern Italy, as a former possession of the Eastern Roman Empire, would be handed over to the tender mercies of the Turks.

Some Italian rulers would have deserved their fate. In 15th century Italy, Genova and Venice were hotly engaged in a contest to determine which could sell more of the West on better terms to their Turkish friends. When Janos Hunyadi and St. John of Capistrano finally drove Mehmed II from the walls of Belgrade, the victors discovered two Venetian ships, part of a contingent promised and outfitted by the Serene Republic for her Ottoman partner.

Today, the West is facing a challenge from Islam that is, perhaps, more serious than any we have faced since the days of Suleyman the Magnificent. Now as then, the West seems unable to make a united front to defend its interests. We have grown so accustomed to hearing our President refer to Islam as a "religion of peace" that we are hardly alarmed when we read of the massive numbers of Muslims living in Europe and North America. The West is once again its own worst enemy.

In the United States, the President makes grandiose speeches about waging a "War on Terror," but leading members of his own party have been subsidized by the Albanian terrorists in Kosovo, and one of the dominant conservative leaders in the Republican Party, Grover Norquist, has forged an alliance with Islamic groups that have transparent ties to terrorist organizations. Karl Rove says publicly that Norquist has done nothing wrong. Echoing Gertrude Stein, Rove dismisses the scandal with the quip, "There's no there there." This is like the child who hears a burglar and pulls the covers up over his eyes. Until American Christians learn to deny their votes to any party or politician who collaborates with the jihadists, they will have no one to blame but themselves.

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At Concord

by David Middleton

—for W.B.C. and D.A.B.—

We sat at tables, gathered there by one
Who funds colloquia on liberty
Out of a great estate he left in death
To teach those truths that make a free man free.

Fourteen were northern, two up from the South
To read Thoreau on Walden and John Brown
And then debate before observers sent
To hear the points we made and write some down.

The conversation started well enough—
Closeness to nature, inwardness of life
We need apart from commerce, the retreat
Of self into a self beyond all strife.

But soon those old, deep fault lines reappeared,
Assaults of Reb on Yankee, Yank on Reb—
Communion with a solitary god
Spun like a dream out of the mind's dark web

Or else subordination to the true
Essence of that one Father-God of all
Transcended by an artless Emerson
Whose smiles glum Hawthorne thought could so appall.

Then as the final session reached its close
One southerner drew valid parallels
Between abortion and forced servitude
And said our rage should harrow both those hells.

Eyes rolled at first in silences last heard
In antebellum mansions where no voice
Dared question, like our liberal masters now,
Whose bullwhip tongues would lash us with "pro-choice!"

The "ontological status of the fetus"
Really unresolved? just "a clump of cells"?
The southerner fired back with one clean shot:
"That baby has a soul where Christ indwells."

And so the talking ended with lines drawn
Along the Mason-Dixon once again,
Brown lauded for Kansas slaughterings to save
Those men whose unborn kin long knives have slain.

In Concord was no concord for Thoreau
Had left us to obey a "higher power"
Emancipating us from everything
But that which wills the will's unfettered hour.

The Rebels headed home fired up to march
Through Georgias of the North to win a war
On that same principle which freed the slaves
Or what else were the Yankees fighting for?

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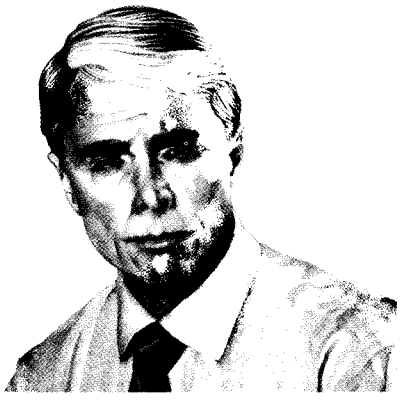
by Roger D. McGrath

Firebombing the Fatherland



While teaching at UCLA, I heard a student ask one of my teaching assistants why the United States dropped The Bomb on Japan and not on Germany. The T.A. immediately responded, "Another example of racist America." A doctoral student, he did not seem to know that Germany surrendered more than two months before we had even test-exploded an atomic bomb. Later, I learned that he also did not know that the Manhattan Project was conceived for producing an atomic bomb for use against Germany, not Japan, and that the Allies killed far more German civilians in the bombings of German cities than in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Although this information had little effect on the T.A.—he was a confirmed Maoist—I think it would on most students, if only the information were made available to them. While American college students have been subjected to readings, lectures, and discussions about the dropping of the atomic bomb since junior high school, I have rarely found a student who could tell me about the more devastating firebombing of the Fatherland.

Britain led the way. Refusing to fly daylight bombing missions because of the greater exposure to German interceptors and antiaircraft artillery fire, the RAF bombers flew only at night. Unable to precision-bomb in the darkness, they practiced indiscriminate saturation bombing and intentionally targeted civilian areas. The Krauts would be terrorized into submission! All German cities of 50,000 or more were subjected to a combination of high-energy and incendiary explosives. British commander Air Chief Marshal Arthur Harris told his RAF pilots in February 1942: "It has been decided that the primary objective of your operations should now be focused on the morale of the enemy civil population and, in particular, of industrial workers." He was not called "Butcher Harris" for nothing.

Harris first unleashed his terror from the skies in March 1942 on the German port of Lübeck, dropping tons of incendiaries and killing hundreds of civilians. Two months later, Harris sent 900 bombers in several waves to firebomb Cologne. Eight square miles of the city were obliterated, and thousands were killed.

The U.S. Army Air Corps 8th Air Force arrived in England during the summer of 1942. The 8th's commander, Gen. Carl Spaatz, was shocked by Harris's strategy, saying American bombers would fly only during the more dangerous daylight hours to enable his pilots to pinpoint military targets and minimize civilian casualties. Spaatz thought what the British were doing could be considered a war crime. The British fumed, and Air Marshal John Slessor declared, "War without allies is bad enough—with allies it is hell."

At the Allied conference at Casablanca in January 1943, the United States continued to insist on precision bombing only, causing Prime Minister Winston Churchill to be angered by our "most obstinate perseverance." Nonetheless, German cities were bombed round the clock—Americans hitting industrial sites, rail yards, fuel-storage facilities, and other military targets by day, while the British bombed the most densely populated residential areas of cities by night.

In late July 1943, for several nights running, the RAF dropped tons of incendiaries on Hamburg, including phosphorous and napalm. The resulting fires superheated the air to 1,400 degrees Fahrenheit and generated winds of more than 150 mph. The Germans called it *Feuersturm*. Much of the city was incinerated. People were literally sucked into the firestorm as if swept skyward by a tornado. British intelligence estimated that 44,600 civilians and 800 soldiers were killed. Later reports by the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey suggested that upward of 100,000 Germans were killed, nearly all of them civilians.

Other German cities followed, including Berlin, Leipzig, Frankfurt, and Munich. By 1944, the 8th Air Force, although still practicing precision bombing during daylight hours, was dropping not only high-energy explosives but incendiaries, killing civilians by the thousands. The greatest holocaust occurred at Dresden in February 1945. Known as *Elbflorenz*—Florence on the Elbe—the city was a center of German art and culture. A similar city in Japan, Kyoto, was off-limits to American bombing. Although some have argued that Dresden was a legitimate military target, there is little justification for the claim other than the rail yards, which American precision bombing could easily destroy—and did—using HE explosives.

Dresden was bursting with people as streams of German civilians, fleeing the Russian advance from the east, poured into the city. The RAF struck on the night of February 13, dropping tons of HE explosives to rip buildings open and expose wooden studs and beams. Then came tons of incendiaries. The resulting *Feuersturm* exceeded even that of Hamburg. Temperatures exceeded 1,500 degrees F, and winds equaled the most powerful hurricanes. Over half of the city's houses were destroyed, and a quarter of its industrial buildings. At least 80 percent of everything left standing was severely damaged.

The loss of life, nearly all civilian, probably exceeded 100,000. Estimates vary wildly from a low of 35,000—British historians like to argue for such an improbable figure—to a high of a half-million. Because the city was crowded with hundreds of thousands of refugees and because so many were simply incinerated, an accurate count is impossible. Kurt Vonnegut, an American POW in Dresden, said that 135,000 corpses were found in basements and underground shelters. The firestorm had sucked all the oxygen out of the air, and those underground had suffocated. Vonnegut and other POW survivors of the holocaust were given the job of hauling the bodies to huge funeral pyres where the corpses were burned to prevent spread of disease.

More than 600,000, possibly as many as a million, German civilians were killed in Allied bombings during World War II. Few will discuss or debate the issue on college campuses this year or hear their professors lecture on the Hamburg or Dresden firestorms. But, then, I guess we can't call those bombings racist. ‹c›

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The Emerging American Empire

Mammon *Versus* Allah

by Douglas Wilson

Let us begin by assuming that we agree that Islam is inherently militant. The words *Muslim* and *Islam* are derived from the Arabic word for "submission." Submission to the absolute authority of Allah is essential. The heart of Islam is submission to the central credo that there is only one god, Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet. At the center of all Islamic thought is the driving necessity of *submission to power.* Christians should understand that the Koran is a revelation of Allah's will and not a giving of Allah himself. Allah is unknowable by creatures. He may be obeyed, but he cannot be known. This is in radical distinction to the Christian Faith, where the central act of obedience is to know God by faith in His revealed Son.

This religion of total submission is very different from the emerging (and polytheistic) American empire that is currently in conflict with radical Islam. It seems strange to most Americans to speak of an American empire, but an acknowledgement of the facts is long overdue. Americans *are* willing to admit that our nation is a superpower, and, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, it happens that we are the sole remaining superpower. But, for all that, we still think of ourselves as a *reluctant* superpower. For numerous reasons, this is not quite true. As Charles Beard once noted, empires are not built in fits of absent-mindedness. In *American Empire*, his compelling treatment of this subject, Andrew Bacevich notes that nothing is served by denying the facts. And facts they are, stubborn as usual. America has entered her *imperium.*

There are two different kinds of empire, however. The first kind is ideological, as the attempt at Marxist empire was. The god of such systems is overtly solitary. Things are run by the Party, the Party line is put out by the Newspaper, and ideological lockstep is the order of the day. The grand idea, whatever it is, is necessarily "unitarian."

The second kind of empire is an economic empire, as ancient Rome was. America is becoming such an economic, pragmatic empire, only without the formalization of proconsuls and tributary states. In other words, American hegemony is being exerted with a great deal more finesse than was seen with the old-fashioned empires, but our cultural influence, economic domination, and military presence are not any less real for all that. We may call it "global leadership," but this does not alter what is actually happening on the ground. You can still get a Hard Rock Cafe T-shirt from just about anywhere, and the U.S. Marines will help to keep it that way.

In many ways, economic empires can be far more benign than the empires built and run by ideologues. The commies wanted to haul us off to the Gulag and take all our stuff. The Americans just want the opportunity to sell us a Windows upgrade. Rightly understood, free trade can be a great blessing and benefit. Empires built by merchants are generally not the world-class human-rights disasters that ideological empires are. At the same time, they *are* empires, and this means the use of force to protect future sales. Establishing democracies may be the stated goal, but establishing markets is a close corollary. Nevertheless, by God's common grace, empires of this kind can provide the Church with multiple opportunities. The Apostle Paul was not at all hesitant to use the perks of empire—from roads to citizenship—as he sought to establish churches upon the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire. Neither should we be shy about it.

With such opportunities, however, come many temptations. What does it profit a man, Jesus asked, if he gain the whole world but lose his own soul? Gaining the whole world is what empire is all about. Seeking first the Kingdom of God is what the Christian Faith is all about. The early returns do not indicate that American Christians are preparing themselves to see the discrepancy.

The public worship of such economic empires always includes an affinity for the pantheon. Many gods are necessary to keep all of the customers happy. A good example of this kind of thing was the interfaith deism on display at the National Cathedral after the September 11 attack. The worship was self-consciously polytheistic, and, consequently, participating Muslims and Christians were both compromised. The real god of this worship service was the god called America, the guarantor of economic stability.

There was no real commitment to any of the gods honored or invoked, but only a commitment to the bottom line. While ideological empire is overtly unitarian, economic empires have a unifying principle, too, though it is less obvious. Think of them as gigantic yard sales, with everything imaginable laid out for the shoppers. The most apparent thing about the yard sale is the incredible diversity. "Look!" one might say, getting out of the car, "Pluralism!" The avid yard saler can buy canning jars, water skis, jigsaw puzzles, tablecloths, and so on. Even here, however, there is a unifying principle—there is only one cash box.

In economic empires, the unifying principle is the economic vitality of the empire itself—the cash box. This is the implicit unitarian god of the system, the god that will be defended against blasphemy. The diversity and tolerance are only apparent in those things that are for sale; the right to sell anything is a right that will be defended to the death.

This also reveals why the theological currents within the Church have been running the way they have throughout

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the course of the last century. Despite all Her problems, the Church in America is still a thriving force in our public life. It is therefore important to do something that will prepare our nation's millions of Christians for their assigned role in the empire. That "something" is to neutralize the Faith by making it just one more item in the yard sale. What is the unifying principle behind our current theological battles? What do openness theology, seeker-sensitive worship, and dumb evangelical T-shirts all have in common? All of them represent a shift from the worship of Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords, to Jesus, competitor for market share. Modern evangelicals want the shoppers to buy Jesus instead of the old lampshade, and they do not care who runs the cash box.

The American commitment to the bottom line is real and abiding. It would, therefore, be a great error to suppose that America's conflict with Iraq has been a conflict tantamount to a war between the Christian Faith and Islam. This is not a second Battle of Tours. Something far more complicated is going on. In recent years, the United States has armed and/or tacitly supported Muslims in their conflicts with Christians in Indonesia, the Sudan, Bosnia, Chechnya, *etc.* We have also supported Jews against Muslims (and Christians) in Israel. We have also supported Muslim against Muslim. The reason for all of this is ultimately the bottom line, Mammon, America's great idol. This includes obtaining resources, such as oil, and establishing markets in which we may compete—otherwise known as "spreading democracy." Because Money is our great idol, we want all the customers to stay contented, and one good way to do this is by honoring their household deities—the kind of gods that can be kept on a shelf.

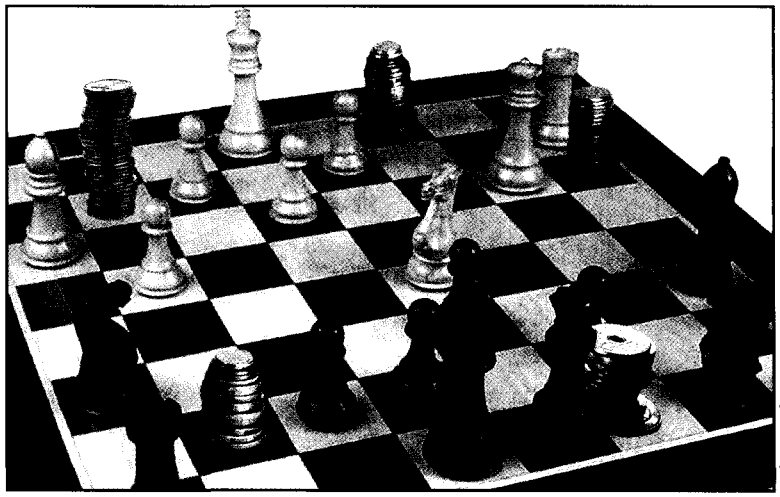
The one rule is that all the customers must go along with this and not complain when the economic empire honors the tiny gods of the other customers. If we agree to have our God demoted, the merchants of empire will see to it that all the other traditional gods are demoted, too. The empire's name for this kind of unctuous flattery is *pluralism*.

Think of the empire as a huge Wal-Mart that sets aside Mondays as Christianity Day; Tuesday, as Hindu Day; Wednesday, as Buddhism Day; and so forth. But every day is Money Day.

Of course, America is largely despised throughout the Muslim world for her residual Christianity, and this places Americans who want to be consistent Christians in an awkward position. We defend our civilization from this Islamic attack from outside because we are a Christian people. We critique our civilization from within because we are not a Christian people. Combining these two, we see that we must call our people back to our earlier covenants, the covenants we have broken. We are like ancient Israel just before the book of the Law was found in the days of Josiah. The Gospel message is constant: Repent and believe.

This means that consistent American Christians must refuse to worship any god within the pantheon, including our own. Within the pantheon, our own God retains His name but has become an idol. This demand places consistent Christians at complete odds with pluralism, our civic polytheism. Christians may certainly accept the pluralistic society around them as a fact, just as Saint Paul knew that Athens was full of idols. By contrast, the pluralist push is for American Christians to accept this state of affairs as principled and desirable.

It is certainly lawful for Christians to occupy various positions within idolatrous empires. Daniel was the chancellor of the University of Babylon; Joseph was Pharaoh's chief of staff; and the centurion that Jesus praised beyond all the men of Israel was a military man in a pagan military machine. Such participation is possible, but it presents great challenges. One is the need to refuse to worship any of the other gods in the pantheon or to accept that it is legitimate for others to worship them. The stopping point is always on the question of worship, a point that was quite clear to Daniel's three friends. They cooperated with their enforced scholarships to the University of Babylon, but they would not bow down and worship. It is lawful for a Christian to be in President Bush's Cabinet, but he must refuse to participate in any way in the jumbled and corrupting world of syncretism.



Melanie Anderson

In order to honor God's name in such civil settings, Christians need to recover a right approach to Christian worship. We will not get out of this mess by seeking to "recover" the Constitution. We should not idolize the Constitution but should regard it as an exemplary document, now deceased. As one writer has observed, our current rulers treat the Constitution as the Queen Mum of American politics. She gets trundled out on the balcony periodically to wave at the crowds, but she has no real power. Case in point: We went into Iraq to topple the regime of another country. This was an old-fashioned war, pure and simple. The Constitution says that Congress, not the President, declares such wars. The Constitution, for all intents and purposes, is a dead letter, although certain parts of it are still arbitrarily observed because they are part of our unwritten constitution. The best thing would be to quit pretending.

Still, to acknowledge the development of an American empire, even a polytheistic one, is not to say that everything that comes out of it has to be bad. God extends His common grace in all sorts of ways. Such an empire is not necessarily wicked in everything it does, but a consistent Christian cannot give any fundamental religious allegiance to it. And, as American Christians participate (necessarily) in the growing fight between the open markets desired by our government and the closed minds desired by Islam, we must not see this battle as one between light and darkness. This is not a religious war, except in the sense that it is a war between two idols, Mammon and Allah. Christians may be present in the fray—there are many believers in the American military—but all Christians everywhere must not give way to the pressure to conform to the prevailing idolatry.

Neither may Americans on the home front give way to a quasireligious patriotic fervor whenever the shooting starts. I

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have seen more than one red-white-and-blue example of blasphemy in a Christian bookstore. One was a clever rendition of the ubiquitous "Jesus Saves," but with the letters run together in a string of nine—Jesusaves. The middle three letters—*usa*—were inappropriately done up in red, white, and blue. But the worst image I have seen in this respect was one with Jesus holding a shepherd's hook and extending His left hand in a compassionate gesture. Draped over His head, like a prayer shawl or something, was an American flag. What is to be done with people who think up things like this? One of the reforms that Christendom desperately needs is a return to stocks in the town square, with a ready supply of ripened vegetables and dead cats.

An important word of commendation is needed here. One thing that radical Muslims can do is follow an argument. If Allah is god, then other gods are not. It is precisely this ability to follow an argument that brings them into conflict with Christians who also can follow an argument. If the Triune God of Scripture is God, then Allah is not.

Radical Islam has not succumbed to the Hellenistic dualism that relegates faith to an internal compartment of the heart and therefore allows secularism to reign elsewhere. There was a time when Christians (considered generally) understood this as well, and the results of that understanding were called Christendom. The Christian Faith was thought of as a package deal. It was a different package from Islam, but they had this in common—they were both packages. Because of this common understanding of the total nature of all religious claims, and because Christendom and the realm of Islam bordered each other, the result was conflict and war over the course of many centuries.

If a Muslim who accepts the relegation of Allah to one option among many in our pluralistic marketplace is a compromised Muslim, then it follows that a Christian who accepts the same thing is a compromised Christian. A consistent Christian and a consistent Muslim are, in a strange way, in a state of agreement when they are at war. And when they agree to serve the idol of Mammon together, each is at war with his own foundational assumptions. Religious claims are total. If the Triune God is God, then serve Him. If Allah is god, serve him. If Mammon is god, then get ye to the mall.

Christianity proclaims the crown rights of Jesus Christ over all creation. There is no realm where His authority and glory are not felt. Jesus Himself declared this in the Great Commission, when He told His disciples that all authority in Heaven and on Earth had been given to Him (Matthew 28: 18-20). A key word in this commission is the word *therefore*. It is not enough for Christians to go: They must "therefore go." The basis for the task is the fact that universal authority has been given to Jesus Christ, declared with power to be the Son of God by His Resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4). In the second Psalm, God promised the Son that all He had to do was ask, and God would make the nations His inheritance, the ends of the earth His possession.

Because this is true, and only because this is true, the nations belong to Him. He purchased Saudi Arabia with His Blood, as well as Iraq, Libya, and Iran. He requires us to be disciples to these nations, baptizing them and teaching them what it means to be a Christian nation. Of course, we cannot teach them that until we know what it means ourselves. And this means that we have some idols to topple at home before taking the show on the road. C

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When 15 states peacefully seceded from the Soviet Union, it was a little over 70 years old. This was the same age as the American Union when, in 1861, 11 states voted to secede and form a federation of their own. But whereas the rulers, of what Reagan called "the evil empire," negotiated a peaceful dissolution, Lincoln launched the bloodiest war of the 19th century to maintain a territorial monopoly on coercion. Adjusted for today's population, the war would have yielded more than 5 million battle deaths and more than twice that many wounded and maimed. And this does not include civilian casualties.

Americans have never come to terms with the stark immorality of this barbarism. The war transformed America from the federative polity of the Framers—rooted in State and local sovereignty—into the vast centralized empire we have today. At a time when Democrats are entertaining thoughts about blue states seceding from red, it is fitting to begin a thoughtful examination of the Lincolnian myths and symbols that have both legitimated this transformation to empire and have hidden from view the federative polity of the Framers that was lost—but still might, in some new form, be regained.

FACULTY: Thomas DiLorenzo (Loyola College, Maryland), Marshall DeRosa (Florida Atlantic University), Donald Livingston (Emory University), Clyde Wilson (University of South Carolina), William Wilson (University of Virginia), Roger Busbice (Nicholls State University), Joseph Stromberg (Von Mises Institute), Scott Trask (author and historian), Carey Roberts (Arkansas Tech University), and Marco Bassani (University of Milan, Italy).

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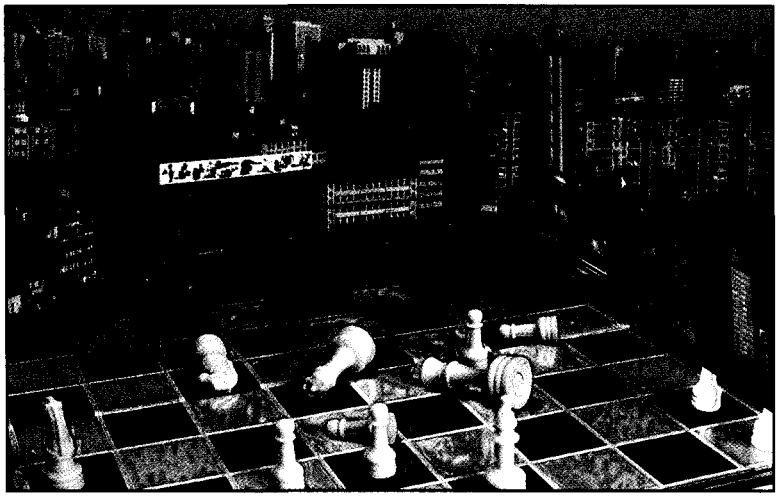
The Rise of China

Seeing Is Believing

by William R. Hawkins



Melanie Anderson

Anyone who doubts that China is rising fast as the new power in Asia need only take the ride I took last fall through Shanghai, from the Hongqiao International Airport to the Bund area along the Huangpu riverfront. It was just after dark, and this mammoth city was lit up in an awesome display the likes of which I had not seen even in Beijing. Shanghai has a skyline that puts New York and Chicago to shame, but then, Shanghai has a larger population than New York and Chicago combined. Mile after mile of new high-rise office buildings, many boasting the names of the world's major corporations, stun the viewer with their proclamation of wealth and power. Unlike the boxy concrete-and-steel designs in Tokyo, the Shanghai skyline is marked by some of the most beautiful urban architecture I have ever seen.

And that was before I saw Pudong, the new economic area on the other side of the river. I took a boat tour to get a better look at this new economic-development zone. It is already crammed with office towers and factories. One impressive complex is the new Krupp steel plant. Another is the Jinmao Tower, the third-tallest building in the world. It is an impressive 88-story office complex, but even more noteworthy is the forest of other towers around it. In the Shanghai-Pudong area, over 300 high-rise buildings of 40 stories or more have been completed in the last five years, and the new structures are much more massive than what existed before. With these grandiose designs, China is clearly sending a message to the world that she is playing for keeps.

American security concerns have been focused on terrorism and the Middle East. That is understandable. Muslim terrorists are plotting more American deaths and must be combated. Yet terrorism is the weapon of the weak. It cannot change the global balance of power. And Islamic fundamentalism is a backward-looking doctrine of social and economic stagnation.

It is the rise of China that poses the greatest challenge to America's position in the world. Endowing an empire of 1.3 billion people with modern industry, technology, and capital gives the authoritarian central government in Beijing immense resources with which to support its ambitions. And what is driving China is the impassioned spirit of nationalism and the limitless energy of capitalism. The combination will rock the world.

For those who like to think in ideological terms, the emergence of capitalism in China is a good thing. China under Mao Tse-tung had been one of the most extreme examples of the totalitarian pursuit of a new Socialist Man. Tens of millions died in the process. In his last days, Chairman Mao unleashed the Cultural Revolution that did much to wipe out what material progress had been made in a mad attempt to reconnect with an imagined Chinese peasantry. Only with his passing were reformers under Deng Xiaoping able to start to open up the economy. But the reforms have only served to move China from communism to fascism. The massacre of demonstrators at Tiananmen Square in 1989 has been followed by an even more important development: the fusing of commercial and patriotic zeal behind the drive to make China the most powerful country in the world.

Australian scholar Geremie R. Barme, who spent over 20 years in China and Hong Kong, described the new mood in his 1999 book *In the Red*. His work is built around the essay "To Screw Foreigners Is Patriotic," in reference to the symbolism used in much of Chinese TV, movies, and novels, in which newly rich Chinese men buy the services of American prostitutes. The meaning is not just literal but applies to dealing with a decadent West in politics and economics. Barme writes

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of the rising middle class:

> As the children of the Cultural Revolution and the reform era come into power and money, they are finding a new sense of self-importance and worth. Some of them are resentful of the real and imagined slights that they and their nation have suffered in the past, and their desire for strength and revenge is increasingly reflected in contemporary Chinese culture.

He further observes, "Anti-American sentiments blossomed in the 1990's and have mass appeal . . . even dissidents have taken them up, advocating reforms as the way to further increase China's power in world affairs."

Mao's body remains on display in Tiananmen Square. In a museum across the street, still festooned with communist symbols, are new works of art that herald China's ancient imperial past alongside scenes from World War II and the Civil War. Mao's giant portrait still hangs over the entrance to the Forbidden City, where he is hailed not as a Marxist but as a nationalist who enabled China to stand on her own feet.

The contest may not come to a military showdown. The economic changes may be so large that America will simply back down whenever there is a confrontation.

Those of us who grew up in the Cold War saw ideology as the basis for conflict. From this experience, many concluded that, when the Berlin Wall came down, the Soviet Union disintegrated, and China opened up to trade, the world was finally on the path to peace. But the "Marxist moment" was an anomaly. Capitalism has long been the natural form of economic organization—and the most productive. With the exception of the Soviet Union, whose decrepit socialist economy eventually proved its undoing, all the great powers of the modern world have been capitalist. The global empires of Portugal, Spain, Holland, England, France, and the United States were all driven forward by energies that were largely commercial. This was also true of Germany and Japan, whose entry into the arena triggered two world wars. This should not be surprising, as only wealthy powers can support grand ambitions. Capitalism is a doctrine of limitless competition and has been quite compatible with—and, indeed, has made possible—the expanding scale of modern warfare.

Military threats always loom largest in the public mind, and China is creating such a danger. My visits to Beijing and Shanghai were preludes to the real reason for my trip, which was to attend the Fifth Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition in Zhuhai. Held every two years, this event has two purposes: to showcase China's advancements and to attract American and other Western companies who want to sell technology to Beijing.

China's space program was highlighted, from the capsule astronaut Yang Liwei used to orbit the Earth in 2003 to animated projections of how China plans to land on the Moon and exploit its resources. Most of the displays, however, were devoted to Chinese fighters, remotely piloted (unmanned) military aircraft, helicopter gunships, and missiles of all types.

It was clear from the displays that there is no segregation of civilian and military aviation activities. The Chinese aerospace industry is run by the state. Its largest agency is Aviation Industries of China I (AVIC I). Its displays featured, side by side, a variety of civilian airliners and its numerous military projects for fighters, bombers, military transports, trainers, and reconnaissance aircraft. Its sister organization, AVIC II, was split off in 1999 to create competition and improve management. It concentrates more on business jets, helicopters, and missiles. One display featured a row of cruise and air-to-air missiles under a large poster of a corporate jet, again showing the guiding Chinese principle of "*Jun-min jiehe*"—combine the military and the civil.

This principle was very evident as I strolled through the two halls devoted to American and Western firms trying to sell high-tech products to China. These firms are only supposed to be engaged on the civilian side of Chinese development. That line cannot be drawn, however, and it is doubtful that those marketing their wares in this booming market care.

Italian Deputy Minister of Defense Salvator Cicu was on hand for the signing of a coproduction agreement between Agusta Westland and AVIC II for a new helicopter project. Italy, along with France and Germany, has been pressing the European Union to lift its arms embargo on China. But this embargo has long been undermined by the sale of dual-use equipment and technology to Beijing. Helicopters are a prime example. Why else would a defense official be celebrating an allegedly civilian project?

One display showed two virtually identical remotely piloted helicopters. One was configured for crop dusting; the other, for military reconnaissance. It did not take much imagination to consider what the crop duster might also be used for if armed with chemical or biological weapons.

American companies have been just as guilty as their European counterparts in helping China improve her capabilities. Boeing had a large mural at its booth touting not only how many airliners it had sold to China but how much production work it had outsourced to Chinese industry, how many Chinese engineers and technical workers it had trained, and how much it has invested in Chinese research facilities.

The mural also claims, "Boeing leadership in the U.S. business community and hard work with the U.S. Congress results in granting permanent normal trade relations with China." PNTR assured Beijing an open American market for its exports, which account for the largest bilateral trade deficit in the grossly unbalanced U.S. international accounts. In reading this statement, I was reminded of a comment by James Sasser, a U.S. ambassador to China during the Clinton administration: "The Chinese really don't do any lobbying. The heavy lifting is done by the American business community." Of the Fortune 500, over 400 have set up operations in China. According to Ian Davis, the worldwide managing director of the consulting firm McKinsey & Company, China is "absolutely center stage right now" for Fortune 500 executives.

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Like drug addicts who, in their lucid moments, understand the destructive consequences of their actions, some businessmen do notice where they are going even if they seem powerless to resist. Before he became President Clinton's treasury secretary, Robert Rubin was cochairman of Goldman Sachs, a major financier of Chinese projects. He recently told the Associated Press that "China is likely to be the largest economy in the world and a tough-minded geopolitical power equal to any other geopolitical power on the globe." And when this happens, it will be the direct result of the policies Rubin and others like him followed in both private and public service.

The contest may not come to a military showdown. The economic changes may be so large that America will simply back down whenever there is a confrontation. The economic changes determine what resources governments can mobilize to advance or protect national interests. Wars, when they occur, test whether the changes have been sufficient to reorder how the world is run and whose decisions matter.

In Shanghai, I stayed at the Broadway Mansions hotel in the Bund. The Bund is the area where the European powers had their offices when they ran China's affairs. The British were the most powerful of the imperialist powers, and Broadway Mansions was built by a British businessman in the 1930's when England was still considered the leading global superpower.

Today, Britain no longer holds that position in the world hierarchy or in Chinese affairs. In 1999, there was no serious thought given in London to holding on to Hong Kong. This beautiful city of free and prosperous people was handed over to the Beijing dictatorship without a whimper. The balance of power had obviously changed from what it had been in 1842, when England first laid claim to Hong Kong, or in 1945, when London reclaimed the city after it had been captured by Japan at the outbreak of World War II.

The British were on the winning side of both world wars. Indeed, England has not lost a major war since the Duke of Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. But they still declined as their economy fell out from under their empire. And the danger to us is that we have embraced classical-liberal economic notions about "free trade" and the neglect of international economic strategy that have their origins in 19th-century British thought.

Economic strategy is at the top of Beijing's agenda—the core of its pursuit of "comprehensive national power." Zhuhai, like Pudong, is a designated economic-development zone. It has a new international airport, about 25 miles from the port city. There is an eight-lane superhighway running from the city to the airport, mainly through farmland with very little traffic. But there are massive housing projects built (and building) for the expected future workforce. Near the city, new factories line the highway. A friend of mine who attended the fourth Aviation Expo noted that, where there had been a single line of factories two years ago, the plants are now two to four deep along the road.

The first challenge China poses is economic. It goes beyond the lopsided trade imbalance that is menacing American domestic industry and the value of the dollar as the international medium of exchange. The longer-term threat is from the vast new wealth and array of modern capabilities that will be available to a regime whose strategic ambitions clash with those of the United States—and not just in Asia.

In mid-November, Chinese President Hu Jintao took a nearly two-week trip through Latin America. His first stop was Brazil, for a five-day visit. There, he met with leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva to renew the "strategic partnership" that had been forged during Lula's visit to China the previous May. "China helped us send satellites to orbit and we, in return, offered techniques to China in the manufacture of airplanes," said Lula. Both leaders predicted that China would replace the United States as Brazil's top trading partner.

Endowing an empire of 1.3 billion people with modern industry, technology, and capital gives the authoritarian central government in Beijing immense resources with which to support its ambitions.

As a prelude to President Hu's visit, the two countries entered into a military-cooperation deal on October 22. Signed in Brasilia by Brazilian Defense Minister Jose Viegas and visiting Chinese Defense Minister Cao Guangchuan, the agreement provides for military exchanges and logistical and scientific cooperation and also establishes a joint defense committee. China's aid to Brazil's long-range missile program, under the guise of satellite launches, will likely extend to other high-tech projects. Brazil's nuclear-weapons program was halted in 1990 after a decade of secret work, but Lula's renewed interest in nuclear power, including a new uranium-enrichment plant, has raised fears that the program may be restarted.

At the May summit between Hu and Lula, a joint statement was issued insisting "on the democratization of international relations and global multi-polarization." This has long been Chinese terminology for ending American preeminence in world affairs, or what Beijing calls U.S. "hegemony." At the November summit, Hu pledged Beijing's support for Brazil's bid to gain a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

From Brazil, Hu went to Argentina, where another "strategic partnership" was declared, backed up by the promise of $20 billion in investments in Argentina over the next decade to develop railways, telecommunications, hydrocarbon fuels, and space technology. Hu's trip concluded with visits to Chile and Cuba. With left-leaning governments in power throughout most of Latin America, China is taking advantage of the same opportunities that the Soviets tried to exploit, only with a better set of tools forged by the ravenous growth of Beijing's economy.

Washington must concentrate on enlarging and sustaining its own capabilities—industrial, technological, military, and financial—to ensure that it stays generations ahead of China. This will take more effort than was needed to defeat the Soviet Union, as Chinese capitalism is a much more vigorous contender than was Russian communism. But safeguarding America's preeminence is just as imperative, regardless of the nature of the threat.

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Transforming the Middle East

Washington's High-Stakes Gamble

by Ted Galen Carpenter

It is increasingly clear that the Bush administration's nation-building policy in Iraq is merely one component of an ambitious project to transform the Middle East politically. That goal is consistent with the principles that President Bush expressed in his Second Inaugural Address, in which he announced that "it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in the world."

Bush's bold statement symbolizes what Fred Barnes, executive editor of the neoconservative *Weekly Standard*, has described as a "shake-up-the-world" view. Such an approach normally does not appeal to the most powerful country in the international system. Historically, hegemonic powers, because they owe their dominant position to current international arrangements, tend to pursue conservative policies designed to preserve and enhance the *status quo*. Upstart revisionist powers are the ones that tend to embrace revolutionary policies. It is unprecedented for an incumbent hegemon to advocate revolutionary change. Thus, the Bush administration is venturing into uncharted waters.

The rationale for the administration's policy is not merely that it would be humane to bring the blessings of democracy to the Middle East (and other regions). That is certainly one component, but the President and his foreign-policy team also believe that promoting democracy is the most effective anti-terror strategy and will, therefore, enhance America's security. "We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands," the President stressed in his Inaugural Address.

In a speech to the National Defense University on March 8, Bush reiterated the argument that strengthening democracy is the only hope of stemming terrorism and protecting America's security. "It should be clear that the advance of democracy leads to peace, because governments that respect the rights of their people also respect the rights of their neighbors," he said. "It should be clear the best antidote to radicalism and terror is the tolerance kindled in free societies."

In both speeches, the president conflated democracy and liberty. That is a potentially dangerous misconception, because the former does not necessarily produce the latter. Fareed Zakaria, formerly an editor at *Foreign Affairs* and now at *Newsweek*, aptly used the term "illiberal democracy" to describe political systems that have most of the democratic mechanics (periodic, more or less competitive elections; a national legislature with credible powers) but lack the rule of law, meaningful protections for civil liberties, and strong, vibrant civil societies. There are a considerable number of illiberal democracies in the world today—most notably Russia under Vladimir Putin. Moreover, even some of the democracies that most Americans would consider liberal often engage in thoroughly illiberal behavior toward certain groups. Israel's treatment of the Palestinians and the discriminatory policies of Estonia and Latvia toward their ethnic Russian inhabitants are prominent examples.

It seems a safe assumption that the Bush administration hopes for the emergence of liberal rather than illiberal democracies in the Middle East. True, even the latter might be an improvement on the assortment of full-blown autocracies that are the norm in the region today. When members of the Bush administration speak of a political transformation of the Middle East, however, it is apparent that they have something more ambitious in mind than modest improvements. The question then arises: If democratic dominoes fall throughout the Middle East, what will be the probable characteristics of successor regimes? Of course, no one can be certain about either the short-term or the long-term consequences of such a volatile process, but the nature of public opinion in the Middle East offers some hints—and rather sobering hints—about the likely near-term results.

Public-opinion surveys in the Middle East reveal a massive reservoir of hostility toward U.S. policies. It cannot be emphasized enough that the original source of that hostility was largely a reaction against Washington's *policies*, not American culture or values. Michael Scheuer stressed that distinction in his seminal book, *Imperial Hubris*, but he is not the only expert to debunk the myth that the radical Islamic terrorist threat arose from a reflexive hatred of American liberty. Even the report of the September 11 Commission conceded that hostility in the Islamic world was directed at specific U.S. policies. Likewise, the Pentagon's Defense Science Board Task Force Report on Strategic Communication issued in September 2004 concluded bluntly: "Muslims do not 'hate our freedom,' but rather, they hate our policies." Unfortunately, that may be changing; there are now signs that their anger at the United States is becoming less discriminating.

The two most recent and comprehensive surveys were those conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press in March 2004, which assessed public opinion in Turkey, Morocco, Jordan, and Pakistan (as well as five European countries), and a six-nation survey of Arab countries (Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt) conducted by Zogby International in June 2004. Both found widespread opposition to U.S. policies and a lack of trust in Washington's motives. The trends also were not encouraging; the extent of opposition was greater than in previous surveys.

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The Pew survey found that 66 percent of respondents in Morocco, 73 percent in Turkey, and 57 percent in Pakistan did not believe that the United States was sincere in her desire to promote democracy. Similarly, 66 percent in Morocco, 51 percent in Jordan, and 58 percent in Pakistan believed that Washington was using the "War on Terror" as a pretext for other objectives. When asked what America's real motives were, large percentages cited such goals as controlling Middle Eastern oil, protecting Israel, and trying to dominate the world. More than 70 percent of Jordanians cited each of the first two motives, and 61 percent cited the third motive. When asked to rate Osama bin Laden, 45 percent of respondents in Morocco had a favorable opinion; 55 percent in Jordan; and 65 percent in Pakistan. When asked to rate George W. Bush, the favorable results were eight percent, three percent, and seven percent, respectively.

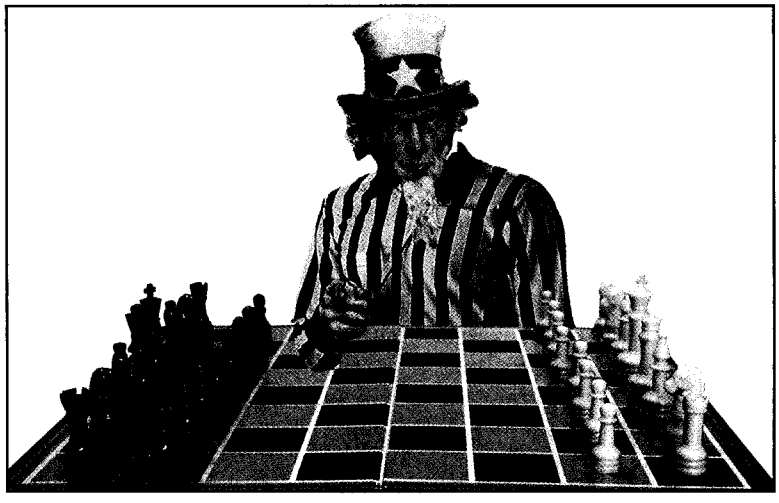
The Zogby survey revealed similar results. For example, 85 percent of respondents in Saudi Arabia, 86 percent in Lebanon, and 86 percent in the UAE considered U.S. policies toward Arabs to be unfair. When asked what their first thought was when they hear the word *America*, 49.5 percent in Saudi Arabia answered either "unfair foreign policy" or "imperialistic"—far more than for any other characteristics. In Jordan, the figure was 47.5 percent; in Lebanon, 31 percent; in the UAE, 37.5 percent; and in Egypt, 32 percent. Even worse, most of the other responses were neutral to negative in nature. When asked what the United States could do to improve her image in the Arab world, the top three answers were: Stop supporting Israel; get out of Iraq; and change overall U.S. Middle East policy.

In short, attitudes toward the United States in the Middle East are extremely and increasingly negative. When that is combined with the pervasive evidence of mounting public enthusiasm for conservative brands of Islam, the prospects for the emergence of Western-style democracies in the region are not favorable. The very strong showing of Hamas-backed candidates in municipal elections in the West Bank and Gaza and similar impressive showings by Islamic fundamentalist candidates in Saudi Arabia's recent local elections are harbingers. Moreover, if democratic systems accurately reflect public sentiment, the prospects for pro-American governments being elected are even more dismal.

The Bush administration may win its high-stakes gamble to transform the Middle East into a bastion of liberal, freedom-loving democracies, and, if it does, both that region and the world as a whole would be much better off. I would also concede that U.S. officials are right when they argue that the existing policy is probably not sustainable much longer and, in any case, has produced malignant results. Yet the odds are against the administration winning its bet.

It is imperative to avoid the trap of assuming that the only choices are the *status quo* or a grandiose project of democratic nation-building. There are several things that Washington could do to improve America's reputation in the Middle East—and, indeed, throughout the Islamic world.

First, exit Iraq promptly and completely. Few events have enraged opinion in the Islamic world (especially the Arab world) more than the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq. The pervasive belief that Washington intends to maintain permanent bases in that country exacerbates the situation. The United States has allayed some of the worst suspicions that Muslims harbored by orchestrating democratic elections for the Iraqi national assembly. It is essential, however, that the Bush administration exploit the window of opportunity afforded by those elections to transfer responsibility for internal security to the new government and begin to withdraw U.S. forces. That withdrawal needs to be finished no later than six months after the new constitution is adopted and nationwide elections are held for a successor government. Washington's position should be that, from then on, Iraq's fate is up to Iraqis.



Melanie Anderson

Second, adopt an arm's-length relationship with friendly autocrats. Another potent source of anger among Muslim publics is the cozy relationship the United States has maintained with the likes of Hosni Mubarak, the Saudi royal family, and a succession of Pakistani strongmen. There may be times when vital U.S. security interests require some cooperation with unsavory regimes. At the moment, for example, the United States has little choice but to work with Pakistani dictator Pervez Musharraf to eradicate the remaining elements of Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan and western Pakistan. Even in cases where cooperation in unavoidable, however, the United States should refrain from expressing approval of the regime—much less appearing to be the regime's patron or bodyguard. Washington's multibillion-dollar subsidy to the Mubarak government is precisely the kind of relationship that we should avoid. When the United States gets too close to autocratic allies, she risks becoming the target of popular wrath when those regimes are eventually overthrown. That should have been the lesson of America's excessively close relationship with the shah of Iran from 1953 to 1979. Instead of moving from the traditional policy of propping up Middle Eastern thugs to a policy of seeking to *unseat* Middle Eastern thugs, we should adopt a third course: leaving the thugs alone as much as possible and waiting to see how they fare with their own people.

Third, adopt an even-handed policy on the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. Most Muslims believe that the United States reflexively supports all Israeli governmental actions. Washington must make a greater effort to distance itself from Israel's policies and to phase out its three-billion-dollar per year subsidy to that country. The United States cannot be an honest broker in a complex dispute when she acts so ostentatiously as the financial and diplomatic supporter of one party. In addition to taking a more neutral position, the United States needs to adopt a lower profile. U.S. leaders should make it clear to both Israel and the Palestinians that Washington cannot be the architect of a peace accord. The belligerents will have to do that themselves, with the United States playing, at most, a low-key mediation role that is requested by both sides. Arab populations may not be entirely happy with that posture, since they want Washington to pressure

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Israel and "deliver" Israeli concessions. But they are more likely to respect a clearly principled position than the hypocritical policy the United States has pursued to this point.

Fourth, greatly narrow the doctrine of preemptive war. There may be occasions when the United States must take military action to thwart an imminent threat to her security. That is different, though, from the Bush administration's conception of preemptive war, which appears to be that the United States has a right to attack another country if there is even the possibility that the country might, at some point in the indefinite future, pose a security threat. The U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq both frightened and angered Muslim populations. The fear that the United States may attack Iran because of that country's nuclear program has intensified both the fear and anger. All too many Muslims believe that the United States intends to occupy and dominate the entire Middle East. Narrowing the doctrine of preemptive war, combined with a clear statement from the White House that the United States has no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of Muslim countries absent a clear and compelling threat to America's security, would help to decrease anti-American sentiment over time.

There is little doubt that the winds of political change are beginning to sweep the Middle East. Supporters of the Bush administration's policies argue that the U.S. mission in Iraq has been the essential catalyst. It likely has been a factor, but there are others that have been equally important. Yasser Arafat's death has created hope for the first time in years that there may be a chance for meaningful progress toward solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The assassination of Lebanon's former prime minister Rafik Hariri triggered an upsurge of nationalist resistance to Syria's occupation of that country. Those developments had nothing to do with the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq or the holding of democratic elections there.

An even more crucial factor may be the emergence of Arab mass-media outlets. The existence of Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, and other satellite networks (together with growing access to the internet) has broken the monopoly on information that autocratic regimes had long exercised. Muslim populations are now getting significant, unfiltered information about the conduct of those regimes, and their sense of outrage is beginning to be translated into political action. Although the autocracies still have potent mechanisms to retain their hold on power, significant political change is likely in most Middle Eastern countries over the next decade.

The United States may not be entirely happy with the nature of those changes, however. It is symptomatic of the dual-edged quality of change in the Middle East that Al Jazeera, which has done so much to break the informational monopoly of the corrupt autocrats, also features numerous news stories with a pronounced anti-American perspective.

One might hope that the Bush administration wins its high-stakes gamble to promote the emergence of liberal, secular, pro-American democracies in the Middle East. That, however, is not the way to bet. If democracy sweeps the Middle East anytime soon, it is more likely to bring to power populist, Islamist, anti-American regimes. That will certainly be the outcome if Washington does not alter the policies that have so infuriated Muslim populations. Before the United States proceeds further down the path of vigorous promotion of democracy in the Middle East, Americans had better ask themselves if they are prepared to live with the results. C

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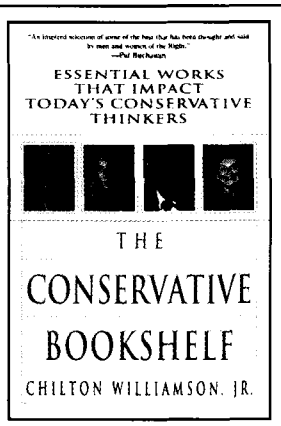

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Getting Europe Straight

Slouching Toward Eurabia

by Srdja Trifkovic

Melanie Anderson

An American foreign policy based on a national-security strategy consistent with this country's traditions and values would have three main objectives in relation to Europe. The first would be to promote the preservation of the Old Continent as the cradle of our common civilization, with which North America shares a similar world outlook. The second would be to define a set of common Euro-American objectives in relation to the rest of the world. The third would be to devise common defense mechanisms against all threats, current and anticipated, that may threaten the security, well-being, and prosperity of our societies.

On all three counts, the Bush administration is failing. In neither its public statements nor its policies does it display any awareness of the fact that Europe is in the midst of changing her character—and changing it so profoundly that the end result, within a few decades, will be the emergence of a mutant superstate inherently inimical to America.

Two salient features of that process are the dominance of a radically post-Christian, neo-Marxist outlook among her decisionmaking elites and a demographic metamorphosis—seemingly irreversible in several key Western European countries—that may result in the replacement of native populations by predominantly Muslim immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East and by their European-born descendants.

Both processes are poised to spread to every nation that is absorbed into the European Union. Once hailed as a mechanism for overcoming deadly rivalries and increasing economic efficiencies, the European Union is rapidly developing into a giant tool of social and political engineering. Its constitution, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights, seeks both to abolish national sovereignty and to destroy traditional values. The constitution pointedly excludes Christianity from the Preamble but introduces references to "equality" and "nondiscrimination." The Charter invokes the obligation to combat "social exclusion" and respect "diversity." The constitution and E.U. law will have "primacy over the law of member states," formally making the former superior to all national constitutions and legislative bodies. Member-states can only act "to the extent that the Union has not exercised, or has decided to cease exercising, its competence." In case of doubt, the European Court will have the power to "ensure respect for the [E.U.] Constitution and Union law" and to rule on the implementation of the Charter.

This political and legal straightjacket imposed by Brussels makes any opposition to demographic change not only undesirable but also illegal. Thus, by the end of the 21st century, there may be no ethnic "Europeans" who share the same language, culture, history, and ancestors and inhabit lands associated with their names. The disappearing native populations will be conditioned to believe—or else simply forced to accept—that their self-annihilation is a blessing that enriches their culturally deprived and morally unsustainable societies. Europe will lose the ability to define and defend herself, to the benefit of unassimilable, overwhelmingly Muslim multitudes, filled with an abiding contempt for their host organism that breeds the urge to conquer it. The term *Eurabia*, introduced as an intellectual concept three decades ago by Lucien Bitterlin and his small cabal of Amerophobe Arabophiles in various French academic institutions, will have become all too real.

Far from grasping the dangers to American interests inherent in such developments (much less seeking to counter them), the Bush administration is acting as an accomplice. Condoleezza Rice's first tour of Europe as secretary of state last February went well beyond "rebuilding trust" after a long

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period of strain caused by Iraq. Standing next to José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission, she spoke of "a common agenda" shared by Washington and Brussels. Some Europeans responded by calling Rice "the Bette Davis of diplomacy" and asserting that, "after a long, trying estrangement, Europe felt loved again." Back home, commentators friendly to the administration were quick to conclude that Colin Powell's successor had successfully prepared the ground for President Bush's February 22 summit with NATO and the E.U. leaders. "Rice earned warm-to-glowing reviews on her fence-mending tour through Europe," the *Washington Times* declared, writing of "soaring expectations" for Mr. Bush's trip.

President Bush and his team will need to go even further along the road of Jacobin universalism and One World multilateralism in order to be accepted as *bona fide* partners in what amounts to a project for global revolution.

Such assertions signaled a major change in the European mood. Only a few months before, Mr. Bush's election victory was almost universally lamented in Europe as a sign that America was deeply weird at home and dangerous abroad. "European support for strong American leadership in the world has declined significantly over the past two years, as has approval for President George Bush's international policies," reported the German Marshall Fund in its *Transatlantic Trends 2004*, based on interviews with 10,000 respondents. The views of those Europeans, and millions of others just like them, were shaped by a media scene that only appears more diverse and interesting than that in the United States. Its ideological assumptions are almost invariably hostile to all that they *think* Mr. Bush stands for.

That hostility has abated but has not completely crumbled before Miss Rice's charms. Some skeptical Europeans were quick to note that her repeated invitation to "partnership" actually amounted to a call for Europe to join the United States in pursuing President Bush's "forward strategy of freedom." An editorial in London's *Independent* accused her of perpetuating "a strand of dishonesty that has permeated much U.S. (and some British) discourse" that seeks to cloak *Realpolitik* objectives in the messianic language of human rights and free markets. Making much the same point from a different end of the political spectrum, the *Daily Telegraph* noted that, from Secretary Rice's statements, "it was clear that America would not be deterred from pursuing its goals, were her challenge to remain unanswered."

Significantly enough, some of the warmest compliments were paid to Secretary Rice by French *bien-pensants*, for her assertion that both America and France are, essentially, propositional polities built on notions, not nations. Speaking in Paris, she claimed that both countries have inherited from the Enlightenment "the faith in freedom and the universalism of democracy." On this key point, *Le Monde* gladly agreed. "The methods of the Bush administration can be questioned," its editorialist wrote, "but the neoconservative creed that democracy is for all peoples and all religions, is also ours." He commended Rice for laying out the American vision and called on Europe—France, in particular—"to state more clearly our vision of the promotion of democracy, to be faithful to our ideals and more effective in the transatlantic framework."

This is the kind of agreement that America and Europe can do without. It is based on a flawed reading of history and a perverse view of nationhood. Abroad, it leads straight to new "humanitarian interventions" *à la* Kosovo (the one "American" war that the French loved and supported) and to multiculturalist suicide at home. The point that Secretary Rice and *Le Monde* jointly conveyed here is that, on both sides of the Atlantic, the state has become the enemy of the nation. "France is from the outset a country of common blood," Jean Raspail says, but the French Republic is to its rulers synonymous with the ideology of the Revolution; for its sake, they are happy to destroy the nation itself.

The mirror image of this mind-set is the neoconservative-liberal notion of a propositional American "Creed" and the concomitant rejection of Jefferson's view of common heritage that includes common ancestry. If the agreement defined by creeds is to be the basis of a New Grand Alliance—Robespierre meets Lincoln, the *Weekly Standard* merges with *Le Monde*—our demographic and spiritual goose is cooked. The Euro-American identity of decrepitude will become entrenched and effectively irreversible. Of course, Eurabia will be a friend and ally of America if America agrees to be Eurabianized.

Even those Europeans who call themselves "conservative" do not seem capable of grasping this essential point. *Le Point* called the Bush Doctrine "a subtle mix of encouragement for aspirations to freedom," which it assuredly is not, and blithely asserted that France has "a genuine opportunity to write a new chapter" by accepting the role of a second locomotive in the train of history. The Catholic *La Croix* found fault in Secretary Rice's "magisterial lecture" only insofar as "America's strategic doctrine is the exact opposite of the UN's universalism and multilateralism, with alliances built *a la carte*." *Le Figaro* enthused that "Secretary Rice's reconciliation show is most welcome" and heralds the rebuilding of a relationship. *Nord Éclair* proclaimed that Rice "reminded old Europe, tempted to forget its past and its duties, that the fight for the rights of individuals and of peoples is never finished." *Les Dernieres Nouvelles d'Alsace* opined that "even the most reluctant of America's allies" would be hard pressed to refuse the offer of a global partnership for freedom at the risk of being marginalized.

President Bush, in the course of his European tour ten days later, went out of his way to praise the European Union as the ally of America in the global war for "freedom." As liberal commentator Michael Kinsley of the *Los Angeles Times* noted with a touch of sarcasm, he sounded "less like a Republican than a dorm-room Marxist." Kinsley noted revealing similarities between Mr. Bush's paeans to global democratic revolution and those published nearly a century ago by Marxist agita-

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tor Emma Goldman in her essay "The Psychology of Political Violence," in which she wrote that "the despair millions of people are daily made to endure" inspires them to terrorist violence.

Thanks to Secretary Rice's and President Bush's tours, the European opinion class's loathing of the "Bush bacillus," as the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* memorably put it last fall, has abated, but it has not disappeared. Their objection had never been to the President's willingness to wage wars as such: His European detractors were almost invariably supportive of Bill Clinton's pro-Muslim Balkan wars. The European demand has always been for a seat at the table when those wars are plotted and for a suitably universalist banner under which they are waged. President Bush and his team will need to go even further along the road of Jacobin universalism and One World multilateralism in order to be accepted as *bona fide* partners in what amounts to a project for global revolution.

This kind of partnership, which gives a totally new and unwelcome meaning to the phrase "beyond left and right," can be resisted only if we have a backlash against Jacobinism, both here and in Europe. Its foundation is the fact that, for the time being at least, nations still survive, in spite of what is being done to them. The Dutch are beginning to realize that, after Theo van Gogh's ritual slaughter by a Muslim, each one of them may soon face the choice between *dhimmitude* and death. French students wantonly beaten by Arab and African thugs in the streets of Paris may discover Raspail. And America cannot be completely de-Americanized unless her still-silent majority gives up on the vision of itself as a real nation, a distinct people with shared civilizational and religious roots. Most Americans, if asked, still prefer the notion of "peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations; entangling alliances with none" to Mr. Bush's assertion, in his Second Inaugural Address, that "America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one." Their instinctive distrust of irresponsible exceptionalism is a sign of hope. The moral absolutism that the "benevolent global hegemonists" substitute for rational argument *can* be challenged, and it will be, although a lot of blood may be shed and a lot of fortune squandered before that happens.

If and when it does happen, the objective of U.S. foreign policy will be, once again, to maintain the security and freedom of this country and to uphold her traditions and authentic values. In relation to Europe, this will mean that the billions spent on supporting Yushchenko's sordid circus in the Ukraine, the KLA in Kosovo, Izetbegovic's jihadists in Bosnia, and countless other Sorosite pet projects everywhere else in Eastern Europe will be redirected to America's true friends and natural allies.

The notion of the National Endowment for Democracy actually helping democracy by supporting Slovakia's Christian Democrats, Poland's anti-abortionists, British Euroskeptics, German anti-immigrationists, or activists opposed to the Hague Tribunal in Serbia may sound far-fetched—but not more so than the notion of the United States intervening in the Balkans on the side of Islam would have sounded two or three decades ago. The new imperium, of which the Project for a New American Century and the European Union are insignificantly distinct varieties, demands docile and pliant subjects rather than responsible citizens capable of making moral distinctions. By acting against it, Americans will save their country and may even help save Europe from herself.

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Why Russia Does Not Fear an Iranian Bomb

(But Israel Does)

by Wayne Allensworth

When President George W. Bush met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Bratislava, Slovakia, this past February, the first item on the White House's laundry list of discussion points for the summit was nuclear programs, including Russian aid to Iran's nuclear-power effort. After the meeting, Putin told reporters that the issue of nuclear proliferation was a key topic for discussion and stated that Russia understood American concerns: "We share a common opinion in this regard and a common approach," Putin said. President Bush seemed outwardly satisfied with Putin's assurances, saying that "We agreed that Iran should not have a nuclear weapon. I appreciate Vladimir's understanding on that."

At issue was Moscow's fulfillment of a contract with Tehran to develop the Bushehr nuclear-power station, which Washington and Tel Aviv have contended is part of a civilian nuclear energy cover for developing nuclear weapons—something that both the United States and Israel see as unacceptable, to the extent that they have dropped hints about a military strike to prevent Tehran's acquisition of an "Islamic bomb." Putin's assurances, however, were meant to set the stage for a further agreement between Russia and Iran on nuclear cooperation, something intended to forestall an American-Israeli attack on Iran. Indeed, Russian Defense Minister Sergey Ivanov subsequently said that "Russia will do everything possible to prevent events in Iran from following the Iraqi scenario."

The agreement signed by Russia and Iran on February 27 was designed to assure the Europeans and Americans that Moscow was not acting irresponsibly—further underpinning Moscow's arguments that a "military option" for dealing with the Iranian nuclear question should not be on anyone's table. The agreement, as described by Jamestown Foundation analyst Pavel K. Baev, is, indeed, "airtight" by international standards: In early 2006, Russia will deliver 100 tons of enriched uranium to the Bushehr power station, which is nearly completed. The reactor is scheduled to begin operating late next year. Iran, according to the terms of the Russo-Iranian agreement, will return the used fuel to Russia in about a decade. Moscow reportedly resisted Iranian efforts to speed up delivery of the enriched uranium and to relax its terms concerning the used fuel's return to Russia.

So why were the Americans and Europeans (particularly Great Britain, Germany, and France) uneasy about the agreement? First, outside observers have noted that, even if the Bushehr power station is operated transparently, it will provide Iran with a considerable amount of nuclear expertise. Second, the Europeans have been pushing a package of incentives, both economic and political (including dangling the prospect of entry into the World Trade Organization before the Iranians), to persuade Tehran not to pursue a uranium-enrichment program. Moscow's plan to go ahead with a separate deal appeared to undercut those efforts. Finally, Bushehr is not the only facility the Iranians have. Viktor Minz, a former Russian Foreign Ministry advisor, voiced the unspoken concerns of many of the Westerners: "Any system of checks and controls can only work if the country that signs up to it is ready to observe it. There is an entire network of nuclear facilities in Iran, many of them underground." Russia's nonproliferation programs apply only to the Bushehr facility.

Moscow is heavily involved in the Iranian nuclear effort. More than 2,000 Russian citizens reportedly work at the Bushehr station, and the number may increase to as many as 3,000. Aleksandr Rumyantsev, head of the Russian Federal Atomic Energy Agency (Minatom), has commented on the prospects for Russian scientists and technicians working on other plants that Iran may have in mind. Meanwhile, amid the flurry of hints about American and Israeli military action, the Bushehr station, with Russian help, appears to be digging in: According to a Russian engineer working at Bushehr, Russian workers have dug 1,000 kilometers of tunnels there. Moscow is determined that the Bushehr project go forward: Russia has been hinting that she would veto any U.N. efforts to impose sanctions on Iran to prevent the further development of an Iranian nuclear capability.

At the same time, the Europeans do not appear to see a nuclear Iran as an immediate threat. Though the chief European powers—France, Germany, and Great Britain—would like to see nonproliferation work as a policy, their efforts, like Russia's, may be aimed as much at preventing a U.S./Israeli military strike on Iran and avoiding further destabilization of the Middle East as at preventing the Iranians' acquisition of nuclear weapons. Why the United States should be behaving aggressively just now is not apparent: U.S. estimates have the Iranians "going nuclear" no sooner than the next decade. Apart from that, nuclear deterrence worked effectively during the Cold War and could work again in the case of Iran, which, in any case, does not appear to be developing a nuclear program with the aim of launching a suicidal attack on the United States or turning over nuclear material to terrorists to do the job for them.

Israel does, of course, see a nuclear Iran as an immediate threat. Again, it seems unlikely that Tehran would launch a nuclear first strike on Tel Aviv, since the Israelis have a considerable nuclear stockpile and would likely retaliate. (Some reports have Israel's nuclear arsenal as the fifth or sixth largest in the world.) Iran does, however, support terrorist groups that target Israel, and an Iranian bomb could restrict Tel Aviv's options in dealing with Tehran on that score. More importantly,

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perhaps, the Sharon government's ability to act as it pleases could be constrained. Ray McGovern, a respected former CIA intelligence analyst who heads Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, put it this way: Israel is determined "to prevent its neighbors from acquiring the kind of capability that could infringe on the freedom it now enjoys to carry out military and other actions" in the Middle East.

If the possibility of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons were not enough to alarm Sharon and the present Israeli administration, columnist Roger Howard points out that, while

> Iran's bid to develop nuclear arms could perhaps herald a military confrontation with the United States, their acquisition would be much more likely to lead to a new diplomatic rapprochement . . . that would tempt Washington to focus on Iran's nuclear challenge at the expense of Israel's perceived interests.

The Iranians can see, for example, how the United States treats North Korea more carefully now that the communist regime has announced it has nuclear weapons. In this case, the Bush administration's insistence on helping the Sharon government in its plans to remake the Middle East have only spurred on Iranian efforts to expand their nuclear program. Small wonder, then, that official Israeli views on an Iranian bomb have been more alarmist than those of U.S. intelligence. Ray McGovern continues: "One reason the Israelis are pressing hard for early action may simply be out of a desire to ensure that George W. Bush will have a few more years as president after an attack on Iran, so that they will have him to stand with Israel when bedlam breaks out in the Middle East."

Iran's position is as easy to understand as that of Israel. Tehran wants nuclear weapons to deter the United States *and* the Israelis. As related by Mr. McGovern, Sen. Richard Lugar, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, inadvertently let the cat out the bag on a recent Sunday talk show. Senator Lugar was attempting to answer a simple question: Why does Iran want nuclear weapons? Lugar began to state candidly "Well, you know, Israel has . . . "; then he caught himself, saying that Israel "allegedly" has nuclear weapons. Plainly stated, Iran wants nuclear weapons because Israel has them—and Senator Lugar knows full well that she does. So why does that represent a clear and present danger to the United States?

Moscow is in a much more vulnerable geographic position than the United States regarding an "Islamic bomb." Indeed, with Pakistan going nuclear in the 1990's and Tehran desiring to do so, some Russian observers fear what Russian nonproliferation expert Vladimir Sotnikov called an "Islamic Nuclear Belt" on Russia's southern flank. Sotnikov's comments should focus our attention on that southern flank—and what may be a partial explanation for Russia's apparent lack of alarm at Iran's attempts to develop her nuclear sector.

Russia has continued to develop strategic ties to both India and China in areas such as arms sales, security, and energy. India and China are moving forward with ambitious economic development plans, both of which require fuel and energy: oil, natural gas, and electricity generated by Russian power stations. In view of the U.S. incursion into the Middle East (and, on India's part, the U.S. relationship with her enemy Pakistan), all three have a desire to balance the U.S.-dominated "unipolar" world by developing alternative centers of military and economic power (a "multipolar" world). With a nuclear Iran, the multipolar scenario becomes more plausible: As noted above, a nuclear Iran could temper U.S. plans for further unilateral military actions in the Middle East, reining in what many (not only in Russia, India, and China) consider a "hyperpower" on a rampage—a rampage that has included expansion into Russia's traditional sphere of influence in Central Asia and the Caucasus, to say nothing of the U.S. role in the recent Ukrainian presidential elections or of NATO's eastward expansion. Once more, the term *encirclement* is being heard in Russia: Moscow clearly fears being cut off and isolated by the U.S. hyperpower. A nuclear Iran friendly to Russia could break the blockade on the southwestern Russian flank. Putin's recent announcement that he will visit Tehran in April (I write in March) seems to indicate that Moscow is at least partly thinking in such geostrategic terms. As far as the "War on Terror," Moscow has not seen Tehran as the source of support for the Chechen insurgents: The Muslims who have provided money, supplies, and men for the Chechens are Arabs, not Iranians.

That said, one should never discount the Russian internal political situation or economic motives in such calculations. Geopolitics only partly explain the Iranian-Russian relationship. The Russian nuclear-energy sector is one of many currently up for grabs in the battle of the Kremlin political/economic "clans" for the choicest morsels of the country's economic pie. Yulia Latynina, one of Russia's most perceptive and well-informed journalists, advises us to follow the money—and the money from the current Russia-Iran nuclear deal is now flowing in the direction of Gazprom, the Russian gas monopoly controlled by Putin's "St. Petersburger" cronies. Until October 2004, the company that had contracted to build the Bushehr power station, Atomstroiexport, was majority owned by a private shareholder. Then, state auditors discovered certain tax violations. Subsequently, the controlling stake in the company was sold to Gazprombank for a song: $25 million for a company that could receive up to $20 billion in contracts in the next few years.

The private shareholder who owned the controlling stake in Atomstroiexport likely had a choice: Either sell for a pittance or have the state attack his company, the way it did Mikhail Khodorkovsky's Yukos, and see it seized outright. Once the property was in the right hands, any obstacles to forging ahead with the Iranian nuclear deal went away. The nuclear deal was signed, according to Latynina, for "purely commercial reasons," which seems entirely plausible given the avaricious nature of the Russian elite. Experts who were stumped by the deal were "asking the wrong questions." They were trying to explain the nuclear deal with Iran only in geopolitical terms, but "you should ask instead who is making money off Bushehr."

If Washington has any hopes of reaching accord with Russia or, indeed, any of the states mentioned in this article, it must lose its aversion to area expertise and try to find out what the interests (both economic and strategic) of the various players are in a situation. As it is, policymakers often ignore the advice and insights of those who actually know something about the various "dark corners" (in President Bush's terminology) of the world they seek to remake. They may find that the actions of the Russians, Iranians, Chinese, Indians, and Europeans are not as inexplicable as they may appear to their untrained eyes and narrow minds.

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The Dictator of the World

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

"E avanti a lui, tremava tutta Roma!"
—Victorien Sardou, Luigi Illica, and Giuseppe Giacosa, *Tosca*

A New Republic: A History of the United States in the Twentieth Century
by John Lukacs
New Haven: Yale University Press;
457 pp., $19.95

Democracy and Populism: Fear & Hatred
by John Lukacs
New Haven: Yale University Press;
248 pp., $25.00

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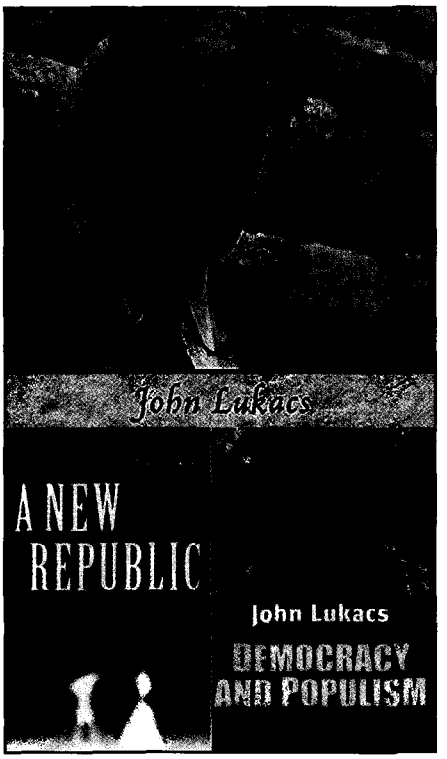

At the time of its publication in 1984, John Lukacs's *Outgrowing Democracy: A History of the United States in the Twentieth Century* was recognized by discerning critics as a highly significant work combining a fresh originality, at once topical and historical, with the elements of truth and understanding from which an interpretive classic is made. Now reissued in revised edition 20 years later, the book carries a new title—owing, the author tells us, to his dissatisfaction with the original one. "What my [present] title attempts to suggest," Lukacs explains,

> is that during the twentieth century (and perhaps especially during its second half) profound, grave—and often not too well recognized—changes have occurred in the conditions of the American state and of American life, on many different levels. These mutations have been less obvious, and less visible and less spectacular, than the great changes during the nineteenth century (the westward movement of the American state and of the American people; the Civil War; and mass immigration from Europe and Russia), but their consequences may have been at least as important and as enduring as those of the century before last.

All are related, in one way or another, to the passing of the Anglo-American Age from world history; the end of the bourgeois era in the history of the West; transformations in American thought and morals; the replacement of republican politics by those of an elective monarchy; the passage from a democratic order to a bureaucratic state; the acquisition by Americans of many of the worst habits of the European peoples; the decrystallization of the American national character by mass immigration from the Third World; and the Americanization of the globe (which, ironically, Lukacs expects will persist beyond the decline of America's material prosperity and of her political and military power). In a final chapter, comprising the only fresh material written for the new edition, Lukacs contemplates a nation that, over the past 20 years, has wholly repudiated Secretary of State John Quincy Adams' warning, in 1821, that, should America "go abroad in search of monsters to destroy," she would succeed only in involving herself, "beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars and interests and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition. She might become the dictatress of the world. She would be no longer the ruler of her own spirit." In the course of his narrative history of the United States since the 1880's, and of the interpretive account that succeeds it, Lukacs has managed to work in most of the grand themes of his long career: the end of the Modern Age; the spiritualization (or dematerialization) of matter, amounting to "the mental intrusion in the structure of events" (*e.g.*, the atom bomb) and leading to abstraction, inflation, and unreality, even to the point of madness; the difference between what people believe and what they think they believe; the outdatedness of 19th-century materialism, of 20th-century progressivism, of the direction of American "progress" (indeed, of the notion of "progress" itself); and the possibility that the Democratic Age—no more than a brief interlude in the history of mankind—may be rapidly approaching its end.

As John Lukacs understands the course of American history, it was during the outwardly bland 1950's ("about 1955-

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during changes, subjective as well as objective, in the national life of the United States occurred. In these years, the Eisenhower administration's refusal to support the Hungarian revolutionaries against the Soviet Union signaled the beginning of America's decline from her position as sole superpower, while Washington's part in forcing the British out of Suez at once advanced the dissolution of the British Empire and destroyed Churchill's grand strategy for an Anglo-American union. Also in the mid-50's, American manufacturing began its long competitive slide, coincident with the transfer of the economy from a productive to a service, administrative, and bureaucratic one. In 1956, inflation became entrenched—the same year that the outflow of gold began, until, by 1970, half of the nation's gold stock had been drained away. Simultaneously, the national infrastructure—notably, public transportation—began to erode. The mass-communications network grew ever more pervasive and ever more corruptive, as personal and family contacts withered, coincidentally with the weakening of the family and social structures and a decline in civilized morality. Yet, the fact of America's decline went largely unnoticed—not only by Americans themselves but by the rest of the world, much of which, impressed, intrigued, and tempted by the American example, aped her institutions and manners to the point where, as Lukacs puts it, Tocqueville's "*Democracy in America* no longer referred to a unique historical situation."

The operative word here is *aped*—as opposed to *conformed* or *yielded* to. As Lukacs notes, "In the history of the world the twentieth century was already the American Century: but much of the Americanization of the world was not dictated by the United States." Another generation in American politics was yet lacking before the change came, but, as early as the 1920's, the portents were discernible. In 1920, *The Americanization of Edward W. Bok* appeared—a semifictional "autobiography" by the well-known immigrant millionaire and public figure who was later to call the United States "the only first-rate civilization in the world." And it was during the 20's, Lukacs suggests, that "'Americanism' . . . gradually changed its connotation from an ideology of becoming into an ideology of being. The transformation of an older patriotism to a newer nationalism was completed." Did this mean that the American people now wished to lead, or even to rule, the world? Not exactly, Lukacs believes. Here was yet another indication of the duality in the American national mind. "In one way they wanted to rule the world; in another they did not." At issue was the endemic conflict between notions of American exceptionalism and American universalism, between the isolationist ideal and the nationalist imperative; a conflict that had reached its climactic anticlimax in the year 1917, "the greatest turning point in the history of the Republic since the Civil War—indeed, in some ways since 1776, in some ways since Jamestown and Christopher Columbus."

It is at this point in the discussion that the added final chapter of *A New Republic* ("The Third Century," coterminous with Part III, "Dictatress of the World?") overlaps directly with John Lukacs's latest book, *Democracy and Populism*, of which it stands essentially as an outline, or redaction, or summary while providing the book-length treatment with many of its secondary themes, ideas, and mental grace notes—most of them marshalled in consideration of what Lukacs perceives as "a resurgent nationalism among the American people . . . [which] most of them [are] mentally, and spiritually, comfortable with."

"Hitler and Stalin are gone," John Lukacs notes on the penultimate page, "and George W. Bush will soon be gone, too." This makes for a startling conclusion to a fascinating book, whose general tone is nevertheless rather different. Insofar as *Democracy and Populism* has a main thesis overriding its marvelous thematic complexity, it appears to be as follows:

> The "Left" has been losing its appeal, almost everywhere. It may be that in the future the true divisions will be between not Right and Left but between two kinds of Right: between people on the Right whose binding belief is their contempt for Leftists, who hate liberals more than they love their liberty, and others who love liberty more than they fear liberals; between nationalists and patriots; between those who believe that America's destiny is to rule the world and others who do not believe that; between those who trust technology and machines and others who trust tradition and old human decencies; between those who support "development" and others who wish to protect the conservation of land—in sum, between those who do not question Progress and others who do.

The reasons for liberalism's slow fade, Lukacs suggests, include, chiefly, its accomplishment by and large of the agenda it set itself in the 18th and 19th centuries. A second is the marked decline of liberal and parliamentary democracy in Western countries, as the liberal understanding of democracy degrades toward populism and the unquestioned—or anyway unresisted—tyranny of the majority.

The history of the 20th century was not (Lukacs insists) the story of communism but of nationalism, taken neat or blended, in the United States as in Europe. Historically, the Republican Party has been more nationalist than socialist, and the Democratic Party, more socialist than nationalist—its nationalism both diluted and compromised by internationalist sympathies. It is their nationalist tendencies that have turned the Republicans into populists—since populism, very often, is the equivalent of national socialism. Hitler was no reactionary, no counterrevolutionist, but "a true revolutionary of the radical Right." Does this make the populist nationalism promoted by George W. Bush a type of "extremist" politics? In no way, Lukacs would insist. As liberal democracy devolved toward populism, popular nationalism served as the binding agent capable of holding classless societies together. "This, for instance, has now become the principal creed, as well as the principal asset, of 'conservatives' and of the Republican Party in the United States, confident as they are in reaping large political and electoral benefits from 'unpatriotic' and 'liberal' characteristics of their political opponents."

As for these "conservatives," who are they really? First and foremost, there are the Republican nationalists, taken as a party, or at least a substantial and influential wing of it. Secondly, there are the Bushite nationalists who staff the present administration, representing the crystallization of the GOP's most pronounced nationalist tendencies. Thirdly, there are the neoconservatives: mainly Jewish intellectuals from left-liberal backgrounds turned aggressive nationalists and "fellow-travelers . . . on the Right:

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people whose former fears become transmuted in the pleasurable feeling that they are admitted to the company of nationalists and haters." Finally, there are the American people themselves, who have made the Republicans the leading political party in this country since Lyndon Johnson's presidency. During the two Reagan administrations, Lukacs writes,

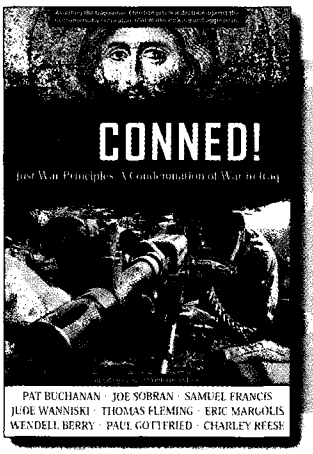
> A great mutation had occurred in American sentiments, opinions, ideas, beliefs, something that was unprecedented in the history of the United States, something that had finally crystallized at the time of Reagan's assumption of power. For the first time in their national history more Americans chose to identify themselves as "conservatives," many more than as "liberals."

A difficulty here, of course, is the preciseness, trustworthiness—even the truthfulness—of self-identifications. Another is the question of whether Americans know enough of history to have formed any accurate notion of what true conservatism is, and what it is not. Is the "militarization of the American presidency" (in Lukacs's formulation) a "conservative" development? The despoliation of nature by industrial corporations and suburban sprawl? The worship of technological and mechanical "progress" at the expense of tradition? A belief in "private enterprise" but not in privacy? A perfervid "Americanism" that crowds out an interest in, and knowledge of, other peoples? During the past 20 years, the divorce rate, the number of households managed by a single person, and the number of abortions performed has not decreased. (Incidentally: How can a public that makes Michael Jackson, Madonna, and Julia Roberts multimillionaires and defended the grossly adulterous Bill Clinton against impeachment—"It's only sex!"—be reckoned as "conservative" at all?)

The United States was created at the very middle of the Modern Age—a circumstance that, for a time, was a very great advantage to her. Increasingly, however, it proved a handicap, as Lukacs cannily observes:

> That handicap was the absence of intellectual traditions older than those of the so-called Enlightenment—together with the persistence of the most dangerous idea and illusion of the Enlightenment, whether Parisian or Scottish: the limitless belief in Progress, resting on a shallow and mistaken view of human nature, the "homme machine" of the eighteenth century, with its jaunty and unthinking denial of its complexity and sinfulness.

If mankind is not to suffer a catastrophic fate, Lukacs believes, the American people must liberate themselves from the hubristic—indeed, blasphemous—idea that the United States represents, as Lincoln said, "the last, best hope of earth." If Americans are to enjoy a future that is in any sense of the word civilized, their public men must solve correctly "dreadful dilemmas: whether to prohibit or not the further and further applications of technology, whether or not to turn their backs on a diabolical notion of 'Progress.'" In order to do this, of course, they must be able to rethink the meaning of Progress, which means thinking about thinking itself. "That, and nothing else, means America being 'the ruler of its own spirit.'" c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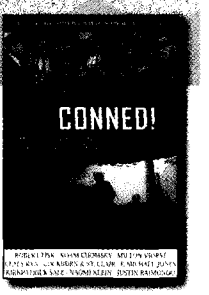

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Surfing the Void

by H.A. Scott Trask

Mediated: How the Media Shapes Your World and the Way You Live in It
by Thomas De Zengotita
New York: Bloomsbury;
291 pp., $22.95

◆

There is a scene in Oliver Stone's powerful and haunting antiwar film *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989), in which Ron Kovic's mother is bending down before the television (this is B.R.—*before the remote*) and wincing. It is the Fourth of July, 1969, and long-haired antiwar protesters are surging through the capital with angry placards. Despairingly, she flicks the channel to *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*, featuring guest host Sammy Davis, Jr.. Her face lights up, and she calls to her husband, who is just finishing the dishes: "Honey, it's starting, and Sammy Davis is on tonight!" All is now happy in the world. Mrs. Kovic has been mediated.

What makes the scene so damning is that her son Ron, her "Yankee Doodle boy," is just home from a combat tour in South Vietnam and a stay in the Bronx veterans' hospital; he is in the back yard drinking beer with a friend—paralyzed from the waist down. He remembers his mother's words before he went overseas: "Ronnie, you're doing the right thing. Communism has to be stopped. It's God's will that you go." So, for an hour at least, Mrs. Kovic has been rescued from a harsh reality—including all moral responsibility for her son's condition—by Rowan and Martin.

If media could perform that magic when there were only five or six channels, what is it capable of today, with five or six *hundred*? Add to that the internet, inexpensive DVD's and CD's, and so much else. Contemplate *that*, and you are ready for Zengotita's study of optional realities, self-deluding fantasy, and fragmented consciousness that *is* our mental condition today.

Perhaps the least that can be said by way of praise for Zengotita's startling and perceptive journey through the postmodern world is how well written it is and how enjoyable to read; yet the book's greatest strength—its genius, really—is how much of what seems inexplicable about the way Americans are today is rendered perfectly, if frighteningly, understandable here. Why did Abu Ghraib not matter? (It's not just the myth of American innocence; it's relentless mediation.) How can George W. get away with his ongoing con job? (It's mediation, stupid.) You see, in an "ocean of representation," "everyone has their [*sic*] own reality." And politics is now mostly about "expressing your identity." Who wants to identify with torture? That's *so un*-American.

Have you ever wondered how American evangelicals can support a President who maintains a close financial, diplomatic, and strategic relationship with the Islamic dictatorship in Saudi Arabia, a kingdom as closed to the Gospel and hostile to Christianity as any on earth? How they can overlook Bush's carelessness with the truth? His distortions of language? The heinous practice of rendition? His nomination of a torture advocate to be attorney general? Is it that he and they are not really Christian? Perhaps, but there is more to it than that. The truth is that evangelicals (and many Catholics, too) are as mediated as any other group in our expanding collectivity. They have their own books and radio and television stations, their own leaders, their own reality; and, since Christians don't do the things Bush and his people do, then they don't happen, and that's that. Calvinist theologian R.C. Sproul has remarked on the total disappearance of logic from public discourse, education, *etc.* Zengotita has the explanation. The "flattered self" enjoying inexhaustible optionality in a "mediated world" sees no reason to accept any limits on thought or action. Why should he?

Gore Vidal has nicknamed our country "the United States of Amnesia" for the consistent forgetfulness that begins for most Americans the moment a story vanishes from the screen. Manifest incompetence by government officials, shifting and inconsistent rationales for policy, saying one thing and doing another, predictions that turn out wrong—all are readily accepted by the American public. References to even the most recent past incur such retorts as "Can't we just move on?" or variations on "That was then, this is now." The President and his defenders constantly speak this way, as did Clinton before them. In the age of remote control and satellite TV, the past ceases to be; in an age of public performance and spectacle, no powerful figure is responsible for what he said or did before *now*.

"Only when there's crisis and scandal can politics compete with sports and entertainment," observes Zengotita. This explains why Rumsfeld and Cheney lost no time in exploiting the traumatic footage of the Twin Towers to unveil their new foreign policy of regime change, preventive war, and global dominion. And it worked, because "the grievance, instantly iconic, gave Americans permission to ignore the history of our involvement in the Arab and Islamic worlds." "Systematically conditioned by media to avoid anything they couldn't understand in a minute," the American public was ready to accept the most simplistic and reassuring explanation offered. And so the political script from which the President and his people read, post-September 11, was that of the "revenge movie." You know how it goes: The movie opens with the hero minding his own business when he (or those under his protection) is rudely assailed by "evil" men bent on robbery and rapine. The hero then has license to engage in systematic and satisfying carnage for the rest of the film. (The audience can't get enough.)

According to Zengotita, the phenomenon of Princess Di

> brought into high relief the way successful politicians must address the identities of their constituents, how they must reflect back upon the flattered selves of spectators the attention they are giving the celebrated.

That explains President Bush's hold on the electorate: He has managed to convince them that he is one of them; that "their indifference and ignorance," which he shares, is really a sign of virtue; that their "antipathy to all things intellectual and refined," which he also shares, is an exhibition of common sense; and that their desire for overseas mayhem is justified.

Recall "Bush the Bold," decked out in a flight suit, landing on that aircraft carrier; remember how he dared the insurgents to "bring it on"; think of how he "sneers and gloats" whenever they catch a terrorist; notice how he exhibits his "bratty temper" whenever he is asked a challenging question (which is rare). Zengotita explains that we are witnessing Bush the "method actor" trying to "perform who he is, or thinks he is," and to fulfill the role of righteous gunfighter whom the American people expect to ride out of American fantasy lore. Here, a reference to Richard Slotkin's *Gunfighter*

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Nation (1992) would be appropriate, as it could explain why the Red State voters rejected a Vietnam combat veteran for a draft-exempt poseur who dons flight suits and pontificates in front of a wall of uniforms and flags. Laptop bombardiers, popcorn-crunching warriors, football-stadium louts, NASCAR-fanatics, *Left Behind* millenarians—they all recognize in Dubya one of their own.

Zengotita also discusses child-rearing in an age of mediation; the fate of nature in such a world (it becomes a shrinking and besieged refuge); and how frantic work schedules, lives of "perpetual motion," and "immersion in a numbing routine" provide relief for most people from the tension created by the unattainable visions of affluence, adventure, and euphoria with which they are tormented unceasingly. (Business functions as a kind of defense mechanism.)

Reading Zengotita leaves little doubt: The mouse, the remote control, and the cell phone have transformed our lives and minds even more radically than did the printing press five centuries ago. This transformation, however, seems to be leading not to the flowering of thought and culture but to its extinction.

H.A. Scott Trask is an independent historian in the process of writing "Copperheads and Conservatives: The Northern Opposition to the Civil War."

Citizen Faulkner

by Clyde Wilson

Essays, Speeches & Public Letters
by William Faulkner,
edited by James B. Meriwether
New York: The Modern Library;
352 pp., $13.95

◆

If we wish to understand and profit from a great artist, the essential thing to grasp is his vision, as unfolded in his work. Much less important is something that, unlike the God-given vision, he shares with all of us—his opinions. Still, the opinions of a creative writer with the societal breadth and historical depth of Faulkner not only help us to understand his work better but are of intrinsic interest and significance. Despite his own demurrer, Faulkner is worth knowing as man and citizen as well as writer.

It is safe to say that no one will ever fully understand Faulkner's work—"where he was coming from," as they say—who has not studied the public nonfiction writings here collected. Professor Meriwether, the most important Faulkner scholar after the late Cleanth Brooks, presents a work of clear-minded, modest, persevering, and useful scholarship, which is exactly what his title declares it to be. The first (1966) edition contained 39 Faulkner documents. In the revised edition, Meriwether has increased the treasure to 63 items. Here we can find everything from the Nobel Prize address to the (unsigned) inscription on the Lafayette County World War II memorial. Here is Faulkner receiving awards, addressing students, commenting on local and national issues, and discoursing on such topics as the Kentucky Derby, ice hockey, and Japan.

After the early days, Faulkner never wrote reviews and seldom commented on other writers except for special occasions or when questioned by students. He was notoriously averse to Manhattan literary chitchat and networking. What he had to say about literature mostly had to do with the calling of a writer. His view of the rightful duty of a writer, expressed in the Nobel address but also on other occasions, reflected a Christian sense of vocation. The artist's gift, and the anguish and labor it brings, is justified by service. "The human spirit does not obey physical laws," and the artist should try "to uplift man's heart," to do his unique part in keeping humanity "The Unvanquished." Needless to say, this understanding did not derive from a Pollyannish (or, to use a more American example, an Horatio Alger-like) conception of human existence. For Faulkner, the unprecedented and undigested fear of nuclear war that marked his time gave the artist's calling a new urgency.

This reassures us in what we already know to be true, though disputed by self-appointed intellectuals foreign to Faulkner's context. The protagonist of his fiction is nearly always the human community, simultaneously universal and inescapably particular in place and time. The baseline of man in community, indeed, is what distinguishes Southern literature from "American" literature. The alienated individual, so beloved of writers of the past century, is not for Faulkner a hero but, rather, an object lesson in human failure—like Popeye, Ike McCaslin, or Jason Compson.

It should come as no surprise, though it will to many, that, on the evidence here, it is clear that Faulkner's politics, like those of most Southerners of his generation, were traditional—those of a Jeffersonian republican. He believed in freedom but also strongly in the necessity of virtue as an effort to keep and deserve freedom. Like other creative people of his generation, he was ill at ease with the American culture of boosterism and self-congratulatory patriotism. (What would he make of the age of Little Bush!) But unlike "American" writers, Faulkner (and other Southerners) did not have to fall back on alienation or Marxism. He had a tradition to invoke, and this surely illuminates his art.

It appears that Faulkner projected a book to be called "The American Dream: What Happened to It?" From some of the speeches and essays herein, we can see what kind of book this would have been. In an address to the Delta Farmers Council in 1952, he suggested that Americans had lost the Founding Fathers' dedication to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." It had once meant not pleasure but the inalienable right to labor for and deserve "peace, dignity, independence and self-respect." But the American Dream had devolved into "a vision of ease and plenty" in a society suffused with "a universal will to regimentation."

In 1947, protesting in the local paper some bureaucratic desecrations of Oxford architecture, Faulkner wrote: "They call this progress, but they don't say where it is going." In a 1955 *Harper's* essay, "On Privacy" (subtitled "The American Dream: What Happened to It?"), he observed that the American dream of freedom and equality had been debased by a pervasive failure of "taste and responsibility." In the same year, describing for *Sports Illustrated* his first view of a hockey match, Faulkner wrote:

> Only he (the innocent) did wonder just what a professional hockey-match, whose purpose is to make a decent and reasonable profit for its owners, had to do with our National Anthem. What are we afraid of? Is it our national character of which we are so in doubt, so fearful that it might not hold up in the clutch, that we . . . dare not open a professional athletic contest or a beauty-pageant or a real-estate

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auction [without a rendition of it]. . . . Or, by blaring and chanting it at ourselves every time . . . do we hope to so dull and eviscerate the words and tune with repetition, that when we do hear it we will not be disturbed from that dreamlike state in which "honor" is a break and "truth" an angle?

Judging from his numerous letters to newspapers, Faulkner, in his last years, like every other thoughtful Southerner, was unable to avoid preoccupation with the fact of his region having become the target of relentless national crusading and the reconstructionist itch. His wrestles with the situation do not reveal a pattern pleasing to 21st-century tastes, or indeed much of any pattern at all. The situation was fluid, and Faulkner died in 1962 before the full trajectory of the civil-rights revolution could be discerned by anyone. But his writings do reveal some fundamental assumptions that illuminate the context and allow us to predict his likely reaction to future events. The truth which follows is, like much else, conveniently suppressed in the official and self-congratulatory history of civil rights: In Faulkner's lifetime, the race question was seen entirely as a matter of a righteous America applying the rod to an un-American South. There was not a glimmer of recognition in the national discourse—political, scholarly, or journalistic—that there was any other aspect to the race question. It took the first Watts riots, the movement of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s crusade to the North, and George Wallace's successes with Northern voters to shake the masters of American society into the admission that race relations were a national, and not merely a Southern, problem.

Faulkner was writing before the admission came. He was a Southerner living with the intense criticism and hostile action of outsiders. Like most other Southerners, he did not buy into the mythology of the outsiders' disinterested benevolence and wise understanding of what they were about. He sensed, for instance, that the zeal for blaming Dixie for all the nation's evils had something to do with fear—the Northern fear of the dangers they had created in the centers of their own cities. (Official American history, of course, still blames the pathologies of the Northern cities on the Old South, which ended long ago and far away.) Faulkner suffered no illusions either about the raw difficulties besetting the path to equality.

But in spite of all, William Faulkner—as human, citizen, and writer—discovered a substantial truth. His lesson and his hope were that his fellow Southerners would be guided by what they themselves knew to be just. In this, he was prophetic: Blacks and whites in the South have accommodated themselves to astounding changes relatively peacefully, with good will and good manners—while, or so it seems from the vantage point of South Carolina, hatred and strife have been steadily on the rise in more enlightened parts of the Union. The potential for Christian charity and fellowship that Faulkner invoked, at a time when it was nearly invisible to others, has much to do with this.

Clyde Wilson was honored with the very first John Randolph Award this past fall. He will soon be distinguished professor emeritus of the University of South Carolina.

Metaphoric Angels

by Catharine Savage Brosman

Collected Poems: 1943-2004
by Richard Wilbur
New York: Harcourt, Inc.;
586 pp., $35.00

◆

Richard Wilbur's long and distinguished writing career demonstrates that a poet can go against literary fashions, shunning what passes for received wisdom, and still earn critical praise and become an important figure on the literary landscape. Few of his contemporaries have accomplished even part of what he has managed: to produce work of outstanding quality, using contemporary diction, while, in defiance of trends, writing chiefly in measured verse, eschewing excessively personal ("confessional") poetry, and attaining considerable popularity. No 20th-century American poet of stature surpasses him in command of rhyme, meter, and stanzaic form, not only having ornamental function but serving brilliantly to disclose poetic insights and give a sharpened or deepened view of the world. And at mid-century, when confessional poetry—full of exposed humiliations, regrets, anguish—was dominant, he was concerned, as M.L. Rosenthal put it in *The New Poets: American and British Poetry Since World War II*, to "absorb [his] 'secret' motivations into relatively impersonal and objective structures"; this concern has directed and informed his work thenceforth.

As for Wilbur's popularity, it comes, in part, doubtless from his children's books and especially his play (written with Lillian Hellman) based on Voltaire's *Candide*, turned into the libretto for Leonard Bernstein's musical, including the witty "Pangloss's Song" and "Oh, Happy We." His skillful verse renderings into English of plays by Racine and Molière, often used for performances, and excellent translations from French lyricists similarly have contributed to making him known. (The present volume includes also translations from contemporary poets of Russia, Bulgaria, and Rumania, which make one want to know these authors better.) Such work, along with his occasional verse (for example, a poem for students, a hymn for a 1959 Christmas concert, and a splendid epithalamium called "A Wedding Toast"), has created a broad, if not mass, readership for Wilbur; one notes the frequent anthologizing of his poems. But what made such undertakings congenial to him and successful must have been (again, in part, at least) his original preference for impersonal, nonconfessional poetry and strict forms, whose merits have been proved for millennia and are demonstrated again here. His success with what is, by today's reading standards, a wide public appears closely connected to his poetic choices. His case is a happy illustration of the essential function of style in achieving poetic integrity and of a deserving work finding its audience (and winning many awards, including the Pulitzer Prize) by virtue of both high quality and range.

Born in 1921, Wilbur was educated at Amherst College. After serving in the Signal Corps at Anzio and in France, he took an M.A. at Harvard in 1947. His initial collection, *The Beautiful Changes and Other Poems*, appeared that year. It is the first of some 17 volumes that preceded this one, which brings together his entire previous work in verse, including children's rhymes, and adds a number of new poems, dated 2004. The constituent collections are printed in reverse chronological order. This arrangement invites perusal of the latest poems initially. Per-

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haps it is intended also to suggest absence of evolution in styles and concerns, or at least the author's indifference to readings that would seek to identify such evolution through a chronological reading. Among the rewards of the volume is not that of reaching the moment when a poet has, finally, overcome early tentativeness and reached his mature voice and subject matter. From the outset, Wilbur demonstrated poetic control, skill of a very high order, the verbal wit and playfulness for which he is best known, an ingenious imagination, and a probing sensibility of both depth and breadth that, as in "On the Eyes of an SS Officer" (from *The Beautiful Changes*), makes him just as serious a poet as some whose verse tolls more brazenly.

Most admirable is his ability to intellectualize things, drawing from ordinary situations or mundane objects—which are honored in the title of his 1956 collection *Things of This World*—their potentiality of meaning to an inquiring mind. That is, his verse derives from and gives words to the play of intuition upon perception. For he knows that "the world's fullness is not made but found" ("A Wedding Toast"). The perception begins by careful observation of details, as in the opening of "Caserta Garden":

> Their garden has a silent tall stone-
> wall
> So overburst with drowsing trees
> and vines,
> None but a stranger would remark
> at all
> The barrier within the fractured
> lines.

Next, the poet develops, now fancifully, now gravely, the connections of the object or scene to some larger perception, or moves at once to an intuitive grasp of the phenomenon, expressed by metaphor or directly:

> How beauties will grow richer
> walled about!
> This tortile trunk, old paradigm of
> pain,
> These cherished flowers—they
> dream and look not out,
> And seem to have no need of earth
> or rain.

Thus, "things of this world" become things of the mind—the poet's mind, but the reader's also. This does not mean that Wilbur's verse is abstruse or fleshless. Rarely does he fall into the error of abstraction. What dances on the head of a pin in his poetry is not a conceptual angel but a metaphoric one, a flash of presence, a fluttering insect ("Mayflies," a beautiful poem), a "tall camel of the spirit" or one of the "beasts of my soul who long to learn to drink / of pure mirage" ("'A World Without Objects Is a Sensible Emptiness'"). The world, whether as designed by nature or elaborated by man, lends itself even to transcendent intuitions. The last stanzas of a lyric dated 2004, "Sir David Brewster's Toy," illustrate this metaphysical dimension:

> Many prophets claim
> That Heaven's joys, though endless
> Are not twice the same;
>
> [stanza break]
>
> This kaleidoscope
> Can, in that connection, give
> Exercise in hope.

Clever, literate, erudite, Wilbur is a civilized and civilizing poet whose work maintains the English poetic tradition that honored wit (in two meanings, intelligence and the persiflage or humor deriving from it) above nearly all other qualities. This does not imply that he is merely a craftsman, still less a shallow court entertainer; nor is he an anachronism. His *Collected Poems* stand as their own witness: Poetry in traditional structures, disclosing the world, can be as contemporary as that which pretends to innovation. Form leads to insight, as illustrated by the superb "C Minor," in which someone switches off a Beethoven piece at breakfast time in order to "let the day / begin at hazard," with the soul not too challenged and as yet innocent of what the hours will bring, since

> . . . even if we were fated
> Hugely to suffer, grandly to en-
> dure,
> It would not help to hear it all fore-
> stated
> As in an overture.

Such lines and others make clear that what Wilbur graciously says, echoing Horace, in praise of a fellow writer ("An Eightieth-Birthday Ballade for Anthony Hecht") applies to himself, in whose verse likewise

> . . . one sees
> How style and agile intellect
> Can both instruct and greatly please

What is more desirable in the present age of artistic and intellectual barbarism and degraded taste than the refinement of language and mind offered by Wilbur's verse? It is a greatly needed antidote to the obscenities, exhibitionism, feminist whining, multicultural bromides, and political ranting that constitute much of what is labeled "poetry" now. That literature does not belong only to the angry, the deviant, the crazed is beautifully demonstrated in his *Collected Poems*, where page after page springs from and affords both serious reflection and what the poet calls in "The Reader" the "delight of being."

Catharine Savage Brosman, professor emerita of French at Tulane University and honorary research professor at the University of Sheffield, has published numerous works of poetry and prose, including The Muscled Truce *(LSU Press).*

An Oakeshott for Our Time

by Paul Gottfried

Michael Oakeshott: An Introduction
by Paul Franco
New Haven: Yale University Press;
209 pp., $30.00

◆

Paul Franco, a professor of government at Bowdoin College, describes his book on English political theorist Michael Oakeshott (1901-1990) as an "introduction." That modest claim is fully justified in light of the many volumes on politics, philosophy, aesthetics, education, and religion that Franco's subject left behind in his productive life of 89 years. Franco observes in Chapter One that Oakeshott

> lived through virtually every important event of the twentieth century: Both world wars; the rise and fall of fascism and the Cold War; the rise and fall of communism; and of course, the steady decline of Britain from the most powerful

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country in the world to a struggling middle power.

Noting the darkness of his century, Oakeshott once remarked, with a British sense of understatement, that "it is characteristic of political philosophers that they take a somber view of the human situation: they deal in darkness."

In the late 20's, Oakeshott was already a Cambridge don, contributing to the prestigious *Journal of Theological Studies* and hobnobbing with British idealists T.H. Green, Bernard Bosanquet, F.H. Bradley, and J.M.E. McTaggart. Although he rejected the positive view of the managerial state that these British neo-Hegelians put forth, the young don applied their skepticism to the reality of the material world. He never believed that knowledge was reducible to collecting and processing observable facts. There is, Franco points out, a steady emphasis in Oakeshott's work on "imagination" as a contributing factor to political and aesthetic creations. It is therefore not at all strange that Oakeshott admired Hobbes and Hegel as thinkers who inventively conceptualized human interactions. Oakeshott distinguished Hobbes' leviathan and Hegel's constitutional state, as products of an historical dialectic, from the totalitarian and collectivist projects of the 20th century. One of Oakeshott's contributions as a reader of political texts was to demonstrate the self-limiting political aims of two major European figures identified as state-worshipers. Although it is difficult to associate either with the very minimal kind of government that Oakeshott favored—what he called a "civil association" rather than an "enterprise association"—Hobbes and Hegel, he correctly explained, belonged to an earlier, less ideological stage in the development of the modern state.

A consideration of Franco's work suggests that the widespread praise it has drawn is mostly justified. The author squeezes coherent summaries of Oakeshott's major works and discussions of how his thought related to that of other thinkers into a slim text of less than 200 pages (plus index and notes). The prose never seems hurried and is usually worthy of the venerable, Edwardian style of its subject. Franco is particularly useful in showing that Oakeshott, despite his distaste for muscular, intrusive government, always recognized, as did Hegel, the need for a "judicious lordship for the relief of the destitute." Oakeshott dealt at least cursorily with what Franco calls "the contingent, enabling conditions of civil association." In order to have a civil society, even if we are speaking about one that is not being molded in accordance with an imposed common enterprise, Oakeshott understood the necessity of government. There can be no protected freedom without acknowledged authorities that guarantee public order and enforce contracts, as well as provide for the truly indigent.

Oakeshott failed to address the task of governing with any degree of thoroughness, however, and, according to Franco, did not go as far as Tocqueville, the French observer of 19th-century American manners, as a critic of "individualism." He assumed that society would generally regulate itself, provided that ideological projects and a state committed to them could be kept out of the way. Franco counters this assumption by suggesting that not all contemporary moral problems have been state induced. Perhaps Oakeshott's well-known distinctions between a "civil association" and an "enterprise association" and between "rationalist" and "nonrationalist" politics come down to one between a traditional state, which upholds bourgeois Christian morals and associations, and a regime that is hostile to tradition. Franco observes that a "more historical conception of political philosophy" is discernible in Oakeshott's work after World War II; nonetheless, his subject never spelled out very clearly the time-specific qualities of the late-modern state. Oakeshott's distinctions might have been strengthened had he anchored them in the institutional changes he was witnessing. On the other hand, he may not have wanted to sound too up to date or to be misinterpreted as a partisan advocate.

Two problems with this study warrant mention. The first, which is less upsetting, concerns the omitted value of a contrast between Carl Schmitt and Oakeshott, who were once compared as "authentic voices of the radical Right." While Franco justifiably dismisses this comparison, made in the 1930's, as leftist agitprop, it may, in any case, be instructive to contrast these two chronologically overlapping political theorists who once bestrode their field. Both thinkers admired and wrote books on Hobbes, whom they treated as a father of the European state and as someone seeking to restrain violence through statecraft. Beyond that similarity, the two authors sharply diverged: While Oakeshott tried to minimize the political aspect of civil association, Schmitt argued that such a separation of society from the nation-state typifies a "liberal avoidance of the political." It was characteristic of the liberal economic mentality to relegate political relations to a minor compartment of life. For Schmitt, unlike Oakeshott, this is not workable. Political life is not only dark but necessarily contentious. Human life must become "political"—that is, characterized by friend-enemy distinctions often spilling into violence, whether or not the state is around. Although Oakeshott and Schmitt were steeped in many of the same books and associated with rightist politics (albeit of differing types), their conclusions are so diametrically opposed as to warrant a comparative study.

The other problem concerns those into whose company Franco tries to stick Oakeshott. A neoconservative/neoliberal subtext runs through this book, from multiple references to members of the Kristol dynasty to a dispensable mention of the utterly trivial David Brooks. At least ten pages are given over to Isaiah Berlin, a spatial allotment that cannot be justified in terms of the intellectual, as opposed to the social, importance of this social-democratic essayist and self-proclaimed expert on fascism's 19th-century lineage. Is there anything beyond narrow professional considerations that might explain why Franco lavishes far more space on Irving Kristol than on Bertrand de Jouvenel, the celebrated French neoliberal thinker whose conceptions closely resemble those of Oakeshott? And why is there no mention of Robert Nisbet, who shared Oakeshott's misgivings about the present age, but lots of puffery about that fan of the welfare state, Gertrude Himmelfarb?

Since two and two still equal four, the answer seems clear to me. Franco's flatteries, moreover, have been amply rewarded, to judge by which magazines and notables have extolled him and his monograph. It is not that I begrudge Franco his success. What troubles me is where this sycophantic trend in scholarly authorship may be moving. Will it be necessary in the near future to compare favorably the blogs of Jonah Goldberg to the tracts of Aristotle in order to be plugged as a political theorist in the *Wall Street Journal*, *National Review*, the *Weekly Standard*, and the *Daily Telegraph*? Stranger things could happen in today's political climate.

Contributing editor Paul Gottfried is the author, most recently, of Multiculturalism and the Politics of Guilt.

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by Scott P. Richert

It's Morning Again in Rockford

Tuesday, April 5, was a beautiful day in Rockford. By the time the sun had burst through our windows in a blaze of red and orange, the chill had already left the air. The pitter-patter of little feet—squirrels on the rooftop; children on the floor below—was accompanied by the excited trills of songbirds. With few clouds in the brilliant, blue sky, the temperature was headed to a high for the year.

It was a perfect day for an election, and the city election office, watching the forecast, had predicted a moderately high turnout. With a three-way mayoral race on the ballot, there was little excuse for voters to stay home.

I had my doubts, however. Having followed the course of the campaign, I didn't believe that Rockford voters would find any of the candidates sufficiently exciting to vary their normal routine. Turnout, I predicted, would be about the same as the previous mayoral election—possibly lower. And that would benefit the incumbent mayor, Doug Scott, whose Democratic machine could be counted on to get out the vote.

After casting my own vote for independent candidate Larry Morrissey, I came in to the office and called Stephanie Caltagerone, afternoon talk-show host for WNTA, godmother to my daughter, and an avid Morrissey supporter. "When do you want to have me on to explain why Larry lost?" I asked, only partly in jest. Her reaction was predictable, and, while she claimed to be confident that Larry would win, I could tell that she was nervous, too. Every four years, the citizens of Rockford are told that this is the most important election in 16, 20, 24 years. This time around, however, the usual hyperbole might well be true.

While the Democrats have controlled City Hall for 24 years, Doug Scott has been a rather pale reflection of his predecessors, John McNamara and Charles Box. McNamara, elected in 1981, had guided the city out of the deep recession of the early 1980's—helped, of course, by the Reagan recovery. Box, first elected in 1989, had continued McNamara's collaboration with local developers, and the city limits had expanded inexorably to the east, butting up finally against Interstate 90. In the long run, of course, the "growth"—big-box stores, chain restaurants, vinyl-sided subdivisions—is unsustainable, but it provided an illusion of prosperity that propelled Box to two reelection victories, despite his administration's virtual abandonment of the rest of the city and his endorsement of a federally imposed school-desegregation plan that drove Rockford's property-tax rates to the highest in the nation.

In many ways, Scott took office at an ideal time. Because of the I-90 boundary, the city's growth eastward had slowed. The desegregation lawsuit was in its final stages, and the school district would be released from federal control in June 2002. Thanks to the efforts of some dedicated merchants, restaurateurs, architects, and investors (Larry Morrissey and his family among them), Rockford's downtown was turning around. All Mayor Scott had to do was concentrate on jobs and the core city, and he could look forward to several terms in office.

Rockford's economy, however, needed close attention, and Scott didn't provide it. The effects of NAFTA, permanent normal trade relations with China, and the corporate mergers and consolidation of the 1990's had begun to hit Rockford hard, and the damage was only compounded by the general collapse of the American economy in the wake of September 11. Scott didn't put much effort into fighting to retain manufacturers who make up the core of the local economy, and the Rockford area lost over 11,000 jobs during his term. With unemployment in the city in the low double digits, few voters were excited about the prospect of giving him another four years.

"In a two-man race," I wrote in this space in March, "Morrissey might well have a chance at beating Doug Scott; in a three-person race, however, Scott will return to the mayor's office." Despite Doug Scott's lackluster performance, as the race shaped up, I saw little reason to revise that prediction. While the Republican candidate, Gloria Cardenas Cudia, had little money, she did have the party label, even though some prominent Republicans were publicly supporting Morrissey and more were quietly doing so. Morrissey's campaign was frustratingly content-free; while he mercilessly exposed Doug Scott's failures as mayor, he offered very few specific proposals of his own, preferring to talk about "leadership" and "vision" and "results" and "participation" and "lines of communication"—not the sort of campaign rhetoric that guarantees a high turnout on election day.

And, in fact, as the sun set in a glorious display of oranges and purples that evening, the local news stations reported that turnout had been lighter than predicted. In the end, over 13 percent of the voters who had come to the polls in 2001 simply stayed home. It should have meant that my prediction came true.

It didn't.

The Democratic machine did its job: Doug Scott received only 835 fewer votes than he did in 2001—a loss of 5.75 percent, which meant that he actually captured a larger percentage of those who did vote. The big surprise, however, was that the election turned out not to be a three-person race at all. While Cardenas Cudia never had a chance of winning, or even of placing second, she scraped together only about 500 more votes than Doug Scott lost. With turnout down by about 5,200 votes, Morrissey picked up the rest of the difference, vaulting ahead of Doug Scott by 4,613 votes. The mayor's office in the second-largest city in Illinois had gone to a 36-year-old independent.

I did get something right: "When the votes are counted on April 5," I had written, "the Republican Party will likely become the third party in Rockford." In fact, that's an understatement: It's become more of a footnote than a party. In their act of self-immolation, however, the Republicans helped accomplish something that they had been unable to do themselves: bring to an end the long night of Democratic rule in Rockford.

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How Could the Catholic Church SINK SO LOW?

There are two levels of reality in today's Catholic Church. There is the level of magisterial teaching and the level of ordinary parish life (not all parishes, but still way too many). From the first level we learn that there are serious sins: premarital sex, adultery, abortion, homosexual behavior, etc. But at the second level we hear nothing about any of that.

Why not? Some pastors do believe what the Church teaches, but are afraid to preach it. They're garden-variety cowards. But there are other pastors who don't teach it because they *don't believe it*. And because they don't believe it, they don't adhere to it in their personal lives. They live sinfully duplicitous lives. And the truth is coming out.

Contrast this situation with that of the Episcopal Church over the past forty or so years. The Episcopal Church once taught high moral standards too. And many of their priests didn't adhere to them either. In Episcopalian circles there have been lots of stories about pedophile priests, actively homosexual priests, etc. But these stories didn't hit the headlines of newspapers, didn't make the covers of the news magazines, didn't get featured on TV. No one blew the whistle.

Why the difference? Before you accuse the media, consider how in the Old Testament, when Israel fell into idolatry and unrighteousness, the LORD punished her. The Catholic Church is the New Israel, the one true Church. The LORD will simply not let her go her own way. Remember the words of Hebrews 12:5-8,11: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD.... For whom the LORD loves He chastens.... If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening...then you are illegitimate and not sons.... Chastening seems...grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness...."

The Episcopal Church, however appealing in some ways, is not the one true Church (and has never claimed to be). The LORD has simply let that church go her gay and goofy way.

These are times of chastisement for the Catholic Church. Christ will simply not allow His wayward Bride to become a slut. Just read the Signs of the Times!

Christ is letting Catholics — especially those in the hierarchy — know that the moral rot and the dissent that justifies it must stop. All seminaries must teach the truth, not heresy. The pink-palace atmosphere of certain seminaries must end. Pastors must model and teach the moral doctrine of the Church. The time of purgation has arrived.

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Letter From the Neuroimaging Lab

by Brian Kirkpatrick

The Machine in the Sacred Wood

◆

The applicant for our research fellowship was a likeable physician who spoke with passion about the mind-brain problem. My professional world is overrun by people who believe that, if we just do enough imaging studies, in which a subject works on some cognitive test while complex machinery detects which parts of the brain are activated, we will understand how the mind results from the brain. The applicant's career plan was common enough in our setting, but something about our conversation bothered me for days.

His name suggested a family history of Catholicism, although he, like many scientists, had abandoned Christianity long ago. It would take him years to acquire the technical background he needed to do independent work; during that time, his salary would be a third of what he could make as a clinician or a member of a medical school's faculty. Despite his apostasy, he proposed to undertake a long, scientific novitiate, complete with a vow of poverty. Perhaps some vestigial ecclesiastic impulse remained.

It gradually dawned on me that his itch was religious, not scientific. He was filled with wonder that we have minds, but he had turned to science to deal with the mystery. The wonders of God's hand so surround us that they can be found even in the neuroimaging lab, and a scientist might reasonably understand his work to be part of his worship. I have felt awe as I stared through the lens of a microscope at the swirling, cresyl-stained galaxies in the rodent brain. Neuroscience is a fine thing, but a religious impulse cannot be satisfied if you don't identify it as such. To look to science to give meaning to life is to fill the God-shaped hole in our hearts with something shaped like a man.

My conversation with our applicant led me to wonder how the rest of the irreligious deal with their hunger for God. A nine-year-old girl helped me learn more. In order to please her, I often find myself in movie theaters, giving money to companies of which I don't approve. Sitting in the dark with her and her mother, I have found paganism on the screen.

The pagans' cosmology differs fundamentally from that of the monotheistic West. A Christian, contemplating the complexity of mind and brain, will eventually think of the single Mind that made them. To the pagan, there is no single, uniting intelligence or will behind the world. Instead, there are many independent powers, each with a limited range, and an impersonal Fate or a repeating cosmic cycle may be more powerful than the gods. Given the pagan worldview, it is only wise to try to propitiate as many of the spirits as possible. However, doing so is difficult, as no authoritative scriptures tell us how to conduct ourselves in accord with divine will, and the gods' intentions remain unclear. We Christians believe that God has placed mankind on the earth because of His great interest in us, and that He has left us clear directives. The pagan thinks we are minor players, almost an afterthought, and more likely to be hurt because we have gotten in the way than to have a continuing relationship with the divine.

Hollywood despises the religious tradition of the West, but there is money to be made in speaking to our deepest needs. A pagan cosmology is now common in children's movies, especially those made by Disney. *The Lion King* didn't have human protagonists, but its success showed the commercial potential of paganism. Its cosmology is revealed when the lion princeling is lectured by his father about the circle of life: Grass is eaten by antelopes; the lions eat the antelopes; and, when the lions die, they, in turn, feed the grass. True enough, but the formal tricks of film—music, acting, camera work—tell us we are involved in a conversation of great spiritual weight. The origin of this circle is not named, but there is no suggestion it is a personal God.

In *Brother Bear*, an American Indian boy is killed by a bear. His younger brother swears vengeance against all bears but becomes one himself. At one point, we see the spirits of animals and humans in a vast, swirling procession in the sky, but we don't know if one of them, or an impersonal Fate, changed the boy into the bear. The irony of the boy's problem is enough for the pagan mind.

In *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, a young man travels to Atlantis, where he finds an advanced but dying civilization. Mysterious crystals are the key to Atlantean technology, but, for some reason, the crystals are losing their power. An Atlantean princess solves the problem by becoming something like a minor deity. She is able to change because, well . . . and this is done by, well, the force of her desire to save her people. Or Fate. Or something. Certainly God didn't decide to do it.

Both *Brother Bear* and *Atlantis* are based on the motif of transformation, which was common in Greek myth: A woman might become a spider, or a hospitable elderly couple might be turned into trees. Examples of such transformations are also common in the Norse myths and other pagan systems. The original *Star Wars*, the granddaddy of pagan films for children, had a variant of the transformation motif. In George Lucas's universe, the mysterious Force surrounds us all and can, with training, be used by all. The Force is impersonal and has no will of its own, but we can use it to make ourselves demigods, who may be evil or benevolent and self-sacrificing. Unlike the Jedi of *Star Wars*, or the princess in *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, a Christian thinks it not only futile but a grave sin to try to become a god.

Not all myth and fantasy are pagan. The hugely popular *Lord of the Rings* has a Christian cosmology: All who live in Middle Earth are capable of yielding to temptation and committing evil, but many struggle against sin. Middle Earth has a Christian coherence, as the War of the Rings is a struggle that encompasses the entire world. Men play a central role in this struggle, and death is potentially a transition to a better existence.

In our troubled culture, a pagan mindset also infests our politics. The hard-core wing of the environmental movement values an impersonal Nature above all. Consider the religious tone of this Earth First! statement: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." And,

> Even more important than the individual wild creature is the wild

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> interconnected community—the wilderness, the stream of life unimpeded by industrial interference or human manipulation . . . This biocentric world view . . . has been developed into the philosophy of Deep Ecology.

A Druid would have recognized this philosophy.

Paganism is not only untrue but a dangerous thing. In the West, monotheism created a culture that generated great art, emphasized respect for human life and dignity, and ended slavery on three continents. Nazi pagans gave us the Nuremberg rallies. Paganism has a fondness for sacrificing children.

Those who hold traditional religion in contempt put many other things in its place: drugs, career, earthly utopias. We have such hunger for God that we must put something there. Happily, the nine-year-old girl who led me to find the paganism in the theater's dark has her own experience of the transcendent that will not be damaged by any number of cute animals or affecting images. Her personal experience of a unitary intelligence and will behind the surface of things provides an inoculation against the belief that machines can help her find God, or the impulse to deify a political utopia. The applicant to our program, a gentle, well-meaning man—and a pagan—had put scientific research where a metaphorical candle belonged. Many around us do the same.

Brian Kirkpatrick writes from Baltimore, Maryland.

Letter From Lebanon

by Doug Bandow

The Lure of Lebanese Quicksand

◆

Two decades ago, Ronald Reagan committed his greatest foreign-policy blunder: intervening in Lebanon's civil war. After Muslim opponents of the bedraggled Lebanese government targeted U.S. diplomats and Marines to deadly effect, however, he "redeployed" U.S. forces to ships offshore and sailed away. Now, the Bush administration risks sliding back into the Lebanese imbroglio.

The bloody murder of former prime minister Rafiq Hariri has led to calls for the United States to force Syria, which retains paramount influence over her smaller neighbor, to withdraw her 14,000 occupying troops. Some Syrian exiles are even calling for regime change, which, in practice, would require a U.S. invasion.

The President's rhetoric has been measured, but the administration has withdrawn the U.S. ambassador, Margaret Scobey, and is threatening to expand sanctions beyond those embodied in last year's Syrian Accountability Act. Limiting the movement of Syrian diplomats, freezing Syrian assets, and banning investment and trade are possibilities.

Lebanon turned from a tolerant commercial oasis of stability into a fulcrum of hellish conflict when she descended into civil war in 1975 after the carefully crafted Christian-Muslim power-sharing arrangement collapsed. The conflict was complicated by Syrian intervention with as many as 42,000 soldiers over the years, the Israeli invasion in response to Palestinian terrorism, and the slaughter of Palestinian refugees by Lebanese falangists allied with Israel.

The United States entered Lebanon in 1982, along with France and Italy, nominally as a peacekeeper. In fact, Washington acted as an ally of the minority Christian government that ruled little more than Beirut. Then, Washington sharply stepped up military operations. On February 18, 1984, the *Washington Post* headlined an article "Pentagon Keeps Details on Shelling Secret." It reported on "the heaviest U.S. naval bombardment since the Vietnam war" and widespread concern about civilian deaths. A Pentagon spokesman acknowledged that "there may have been some [civilian casualties] and that would be unfortunate." America's professed good intentions did not matter at that stage. Violent antagonism towards the United States was inevitable.

There was no compelling reason for Washington to have intervened in this civil war. The United States had no serious security interests in Lebanon; America's political concerns were mostly indirect, through Israel.

Yet the United States became an active combatant in the bitter fight. Thus, the barracks bombing, which killed 241 Marines, was not an act of terrorism, in contrast to the World Trade Center attack, but an assault on the military forces of a perceived enemy power that had wreaked devastation on local Druze and Muslim communities. The bombings demonstrated that America cannot go to war and then claim immunity from retaliation on the battlefield.

In one of his finest moments, President Reagan retreated. He never admitted how badly he had blundered, but he obviously recognized his mistake. Although he talked tough, he brought the U.S. forces home.

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The Lebanese civil war eventually burned out in 1990. Since then, the country has enjoyed a substantial renaissance, much of it under former premier Hariri. Once friendly to Syria, he broke with Damascus last year and was expected to do well in upcoming parliamentary elections. His murder has stoked fears of renewed conflict.

Reagan's retreat from Lebanon was widely applauded at home but derided by some as immoral abandonment of a suffering people and appeasement of Islamic terrorists. And it has become part of the litany of supposed examples of weakness that encouraged Osama bin Laden to attack the United States.

For instance, Michael Young, opinion editor of Beirut's *Daily Star*, denounced Reagan for having "abandoned the Lebanese to a long night of Syrian hegemony, to an extended period of militia rule, and to six more years of civil war." Former CIA Director James Woolsey complained that Washington "ran" after the barracks bombing, which, along with such incidents as the United States refusing to aid the Kurds and Shiites against Saddam Hussein and leaving Somalia after the killing of 18 Army Rangers in Mogadishu, created a perception of cowardice that encouraged anti-American terrorists.

Apparently both Young and Woolsey believe the United States should have escalated her military involvement, crushed opposing Muslim and Druze forces, occupied the entire country, sorted out the complicated interests of competing factions, reordered the political system, and engaged in good old-fashioned nation-building. The mind boggles.

At least in Iraq, most of the population is pleased to have been freed from Saddam Hussein's rule. The majority of Lebanese would not have welcomed a U.S. invasion, and many would have violently opposed an American occupation. Many Lebanese Druze and Muslims who had suffered attacks by Palestinian guerrillas quickly turned against Israeli forces after initially welcoming them.

The Lebanese would not have been spared six more years of war. Rather, the conflict simply would have taken a different turn with America involved. U.S. soldiers and Marines would have died for nothing that any of their grieving family members would have recognized as an important, let alone vital, American interest.

Ultimately, Washington would have been faced with the same issue as in 1984: how to get out without losing face. Given the lack of any reasonable hope that an American invasion and occupation could have fixed Lebanon, let alone done so at an acceptable cost, the "abandonment" and "appeasement" would only have been postponed.

Twenty years later, Washington's options look little better. Diplomatic and economic pressure might moderate Syria's behavior, but, today, the United States should be most concerned with choking off any support for Iraqi insurgents operating from Syrian territory. Moreover, Damascus obviously has long viewed Lebanon as a key security interest. It won't abandon its dominant position lightly.

Nor is regime change going to come through any combination of carrots and sticks, short of military action. The dubious experience of the Iraqi National Congress demonstrates how difficult it is for Washington to create an effective opposition movement, no matter how lavish the subsidies it provides.

War would be a bad option at any time, but especially now, as U.S. forces are badly stretched by the brutal and apparently still growing insurgency in Iraq. Americans are patriotic, but there likely is a limit on how many wars they will volunteer to fight. Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has warned that, even now, the United States would have trouble quickly responding to an emergency in Iran or North Korea.

At least Baghdad looked like it might pose a threat to the United States. Syria does not. Asks Martin Indyk of the Brookings Institution: "Are we ready to have people die for the sake of Lebanon's freedom from Syria?"

Serious analysts warned the Bush administration that military action against Iraq would inflame antagonism toward America. Now CIA Director Porter J. Goss tells the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that "Islamic extremists are exploiting the Iraqi conflict to recruit new anti-U.S. jihadists." War with Syria would bring more of the same.

The current government in Damascus is an ugly regime, though it probably does not quite meet "Axis of Evil" standards. Although Syria may have worried about the possibility of Hariri returning to power, there is no proof of Syrian involvement in his death. Indeed, Damascus surely would have realized that suspicion would immediately fall on it, creating a public-relations disaster.

The Baathist rulers in Damascus may be thugs, but they are not threats to America. Washington should confront Syria over the activities of Iraqi insurgents, not over the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon. The Lebanese tragedy never seems to end, but the United States already has enough wars to fight.

Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and a former special assistant to President Ronald Reagan. He is a member of the Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy.

LIBERAL ARTS

DEMON POSSESSION, SCINTILLATING CONDI

"Described as 'A wildly tension-fillled novel right up to the suspenseful end' by the prestigious MIDWEST BOOK REVIEW, a thriller called THE COLOR OF DEMONS, set in a future presidential election campaign, will be released May 1. Opposing candidates are modeled after Hillary Clinton and Condoleezza Rice.

"Co-author Stephen Hawley Martin explained why the two were chosen by saying, 'Few things excite the hearts and minds of the thinking and reading public as a presidential campaign, so when my brother and I decided to collaborate on what we hoped would be a page-turner, we paired up the most scintillating candidates we could think of.' Martin's previous novels have made him the only two-time winner of the WRITER'S DIGEST BOOK AWARD. One of his prizewinning works is being made into a motion picture, and he is also the recipient of First Prize for Visionary Fiction from Independent Publisher. . . .

"THE COLOR OF DEMONS also features a stepped up war on terror and postulates the shadowy threat of spirit possession. 'No doubt about it, it's a pot boiler,' Stephen Martin said. 'But we don't think you'll find a more compelling read for a day at the beach.'"

—*from a press release from Oaklea Press* (www.OakleaPress.com).

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TECHNOLOGY

Digitize Me: For Your Disinformation

by Marian Kester Coombs

Digitomania is the compulsion to digitize all human activity. Its compulsive nature is betrayed by the casual, thoughtless manner in which we are casting ourselves down the slippery cyberslope, "acknowledging" the "perils" yet completely unwilling and unable to pull ourselves back.

Digitomania gaily mirrors 17th-century Europe's "tulipomania." That classic bubble is described with wicked humor in Charles Mackay's compendium *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*; few books have traced the manias of man so delightfully as this one, written more than 150 years ago. Of the tulip craze, Mackay wrote:

> People of all grades converted their property into cash, and invested it in [tulips]. . . . One would suppose that there must have been some great virtue in this flower to have made it so valuable in the eyes of so prudent a people as the Dutch; but it had neither the beauty nor the perfume of the rose—hardly the beauty of the "sweet, sweet-pea": neither was it as enduring as either.
>
> At last, however, the more prudent began to see that this folly could not last forever. Rich people no longer bought the flowers to keep them in their gardens, but to sell them again at cent per cent profit. It was seen that somebody must lose fearfully in the end. As this conviction spread, prices fell and never rose again. . . . [T]he commerce of the country suffered a severe shock, from which it was many years ere it recovered.

Mackay well understood the eerily prolonged suspension of disbelief that can spring up periodically among even the most enlightened of peoples:

> Reading the history of nations we find that, like individuals, they have their whims and their peculiarities; their seasons of excitement and recklessness, when they care not what they do. . . . We see one nation suddenly seized, from its highest to its lowest members, with a fierce desire for military glory; another as suddenly becoming crazed upon a religious scruple; and neither of them recovering its senses until it has shed rivers of blood and sowed a harvest of groans and tears, to be reaped by its posterity. . . . Money, again, has often been a cause of the delusion of multitudes. Sober nations have all at once become desperate gamblers, and risked almost their existence upon the turn of a piece of paper.

In this historical light, digitomania also reveals itself to be a continuation of the dot-com bubble of the 1990's, still perpetuating the fallacy that fragile, ephemeral bursts of energy can form the basis of a strong, sound economy. Everybody knew on some level that the dot-com phenomenon was too good to be true—and it didn't matter. The worship of Information and other forms of digitalia is as superstitious as any form of idolatry. But misinformation is worse than no information, and disinformation is worse still; and digitomania unfortunately lends itself equally well to all three.

The craze for "blogging" is another curious instance of the digital compulsion. All of a sudden, a gaggle of random bloggers posting their opinions in tedious detail on various websites is "changing the way we perceive reality," "revolutionizing what is considered 'the news,'" and otherwise ushering in a Golden Age of Absolute Information. In his syndicated column, for instance, a respected economist cites something called *Economy.com* as an authority on the relationship between tax policy and job creation. This website amounts to the musings of a handful of fairly recent graduates of the University of Pennsylvania, some of whom "hold doctorates" or have "all but dissertation" toward Ph.D.'s in economics. The site states that "clients worldwide have trusted *Economy.com*'s independent economic information . . . since 1990." Aside from forecasts for subscribers only, the site consists of *The Dismal Science*, "the world economy in real time"—links to online market and financial news. Why this site's analyses are any more credible than those of dozens of others is impossible to guess.

Information itself is thus another key commodity that has been thrown into crisis by the digital revolution. People no longer trust the mainstream media or government mouthpieces, so they have apparently decided to shift their credulity *en masse* to obscure bloggers or such sound-good sites as *factcheck.org* or *hereinreality.com*. The notion that, "If it's online, it's fine" is all the more extraordinary considering that the internet has fostered more extreme, elaborate, and numerous hoaxes, frauds, urban legends, and flagrant disinformation than have all the beauty parlors and barbershops in the country combined since the birth of our nation. Even the most innocuous e-mails ("Help me with my science project") and the most pathetic ("Please be on the lookout for this abducted little girl") turn out to be shams—although there is no reason necessarily to believe the various debunking sites such as *Snopes.com*, either.

All the little ones and zeroes weave phantasmagoria not only of words but of pictures, both still and "streaming." People used to say, "A picture doesn't lie." But these pix can and do, and a *faux* photo is worth a thousand *faux mots*.

A far graver source of potential fraud lies in the new electronic voting technologies. These were languishing in the face of healthy voter mistrust when the Democrats' thwarted attempt to steal the 2000 presidential election in Florida gave rise to wild charges of ballot tampering, errors, and general malfeasance, all of which would supposedly be "fixed" by touch-screen systems.

There are, of course, countless ways for electronic votes to be cooked or hijacked outright. But the true problem is that, with touchscreens, "casting your ballot" becomes a meaningless expression. Your vote does not exist any more than an "electron" in "orbit" around a "nucleus" exists. No *artifact* has been created by your act. This turns *Homo*

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faber, "man the maker," into *Homo faker*, a much lesser being. It makes one nostalgic for a pregnant chad, or even just a dimpled one.

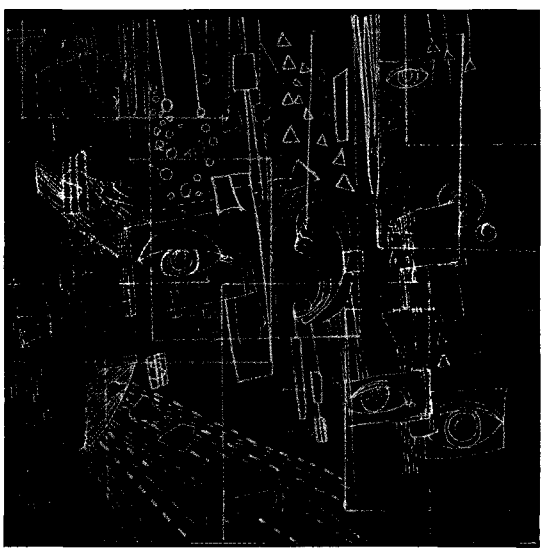
A similar problem arises with the financial sector's drive toward a "cashless" society. Coins have been passed from hand to hand since the dawn of human time. The metal of modern coins, however adulterated, at least dimly recalls the feel of gold or silver and pays tribute to the crucial notion that value must be based on something *real*, some physical *good*.

Phasing out currency in favor of electronic transfers has many drawbacks: It will be inflationary. Without reference to coins that must be stamped and paper that must be printed, we will abandon ourselves still further to fiat money and the (at best) obscure agenda of the Federal Reserve. Even the humble penny serves as ballast against the constant tendency of the monetary system to surge skyward like a hot-air balloon.

Cashlessness will encourage personal overspending, as all transactions will take on the same abstract, wishful quality of present credit-card usage.

Cashlessness will make it even easier for the rapacious state literally to pick your pocket before you see so much as a bit or a byte of your income.

Cashlessness will make it easier to implement such socialist schemes as the totalitarian "health plan" of the Democratic Party: Once and for all, no one will be able to deal directly with the physician of his choice. Digitization of healthcare payments and medical information is made to order for the rationed, one-dose-fits-all vision of Hillarycare. Heroically combating that vision is a new cash-only movement among doctors called SimpleCare. The American Association of Patients and Providers, founded in 1998, seeks to break the parasitic stranglehold that government and Big Insurance have on the practice of medicine. *Direct cash payment*, the organization contends, is the key to keeping costs down for both doctors and patients—the only ones who matter when it comes to healthcare.



Elizabeth Wolf

Cashlessness will expose everyone to instant bankruptcy and economic chaos, should the system crash. Imagine the impossibility of reconstructing all that lost data without material backup; it was bad enough when a fire in 1973 at the Military Personnel Records Center in St. Louis destroyed 80 percent of the files on soldiers discharged between 1912 and 1960. At least other facilities, not to mention families, had records physically stored elsewhere.

Most ominously, cashlessness will enable state (and private) monitoring of everyone's economic life, inviting selective "intervention" for political reasons. With a stash of cash, you have a fighting chance; with an electronically frozen account and an electronically canceled ID, you're already dead.

The cashless society is, above all, the *personless* society. More and more companies are encouraging and will soon be forcing customers and clients to conduct their business online instead of dealing with a sympathetic (or sympathetic-sounding) human. Voice mail has replaced live voices—although the newer versions do crummy imitations of Patience, Concern, and even Polite Confusion. These companies are saying, in effect, "You don't care for outsourcing? Then do the job yourself—provide your own customer service, manage your own account, find your own answer on our helpful list of FAQ's, should your question happen to appear there." Older people, especially, are maddened by attempts to deal with these inhuman, inflexible systems. How many millions of them are defeated each day in their quest to get a simple question answered?

Going digital invites—indeed, mandates—the outsourcing of entire professions from soup (software design and programming) to nuts (data entry and tech support). Moreover, it mass-produces jobs in precisely those "non-tradeable services" that Paul Craig Roberts has warned that America cannot rely on to maintain her way of life and standard of living. We cannot all get along by taking in one another's laundry, nor can we remain a First World economy by auditing one another's credit profiles.

An outfit in Munich called the Research Group on the Global Future has published a monograph on "Digitalization," praising it as desirable and inevitable because it can make an infinite number of perfect copies while preserving the original; it is instantaneous; it creates cycles that feed back to shorten themselves and become "pervasive"; and it cuts costs. The Munich group thoroughly approves of the digital revolution's "dematerializing" dynamic. In its conclusion, the monograph notes that "the drive for efficiency that digitalization fuels inevitably means that fewer people will be asked to do more tasks in less time."

What sort of person could speak so openly and favorably of such a policy? Digitization saves lots of money on payroll and sets up disasters waiting to happen. The process goes well beyond outsourcing: First, the job vanishes; then, the product itself. We are headed toward the vanishing point, the still point of the overturning world. There is another name for dematerialization: death.

Finally, the FDA announced that it has approved the VeriChip Health Information Microtransponder, a radio-frequency microchip manufactured by Digital Angel Corp. for invisible implantation into humans. When scanned, it reveals blood type, allergies, medical history, and anything else that has been encoded. Of course, "a secure database" is part of the package, along with earnest assurances that "only information the patient wants disseminated [will be] available" (*Washington Times*, October 14, 2004). Right: That's exactly how databases behave in the real world—100 percent secure, 100 percent benign. And, as usual, the need for implanting chips is justified by "hard cases" such as advanced diabetes and Alzheimer's. And let's not forget *the children*: Children can't articulate their ills, so the chip will speak up for them just like a tiny, subcutaneous John Edwards.

It's a sure bet that we will ride the digital tiger to the bitter end. The day is coming when we will all be microchipped, scanned and tracked around the clock, around the globe. Our salvation, however, by the excruciating grace of God, is that the trackers will be too incompetent to do their job and that, through those blessed loopholes of human error, the human spirit will keep on escaping.

Marian Kester Coombs writes from Crofton, Maryland.

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An Appointment to the Supreme Court

by William F. Harvey

It was a beautiful day in May 1979 when the Georgetown University Law School held its commencement. Honorary degrees were awarded to Justice William J. Brennan, Jr., of the U.S. Supreme Court, and Judge John A. Danaher, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. It was an hour with extraordinary coincidence because their lives had crossed before.

As the judges walked to the podium, my memory drifted to an earlier day, in 1961, in the office of Judge Warren E. Burger, then a member of the U.S. Court of Appeals and Judge Danaher's colleague.

I knocked on Judge Burger's door. It was ajar. "Come in, Bill," he said. His secretary had alerted him that I had arrived for our appointment. I entered his private or inner office, an office that he alone used. It had pictures of Mrs. Burger, family members, and friends in St. Paul, Minnesota. The principal display in this office was a glass or plastic encased Medal of Honor. "My grandfather received it at Shiloh," he said. "He was a drummer boy who lied about his age, so that he might join a Minnesota regiment. At Shiloh, he survived." However young he was, his conduct that day merited the Medal of Honor. Very clearly, Judge Burger cherished it and his family's history.

The afternoon sun filled the office with comfortable light. He directed me to a chair in front of the desk where he was seated. By agreement with Judge Danaher, for whom I worked full-time, I also worked part-time as his law clerk on several cases and subjects.

On this occasion, we discussed Justice Felix Frankfurter and Justice Brennan, not pending cases. Earlier in the week, Justice Frankfurter attended a law clerks' luncheon. It was held in the judge's dining room on the fifth floor of the U.S. Court House at 3rd and Constitution Avenue in Washington. Eleven law clerks were present. Each worked for one of the nine judges on the court. Two additional clerks were motion clerks who worked under the chief judge of the court, other judges, or the court's clerk.

The law clerks' tradition was a luncheon attended by people the law clerks decided to invite. No invited guest declined an invitation. During that law clerks' year, all nine judges on the court attended. Other prominent Washingtonians, members of the Supreme Court, and other attorneys also accepted their invitation.

Judge Burger asked for my impressions of Justice Frankfurter. I said that he was a stunning conversationalist. He enjoyed discussing books that we had recently read. He expressed clear and strong opinions about every subject mentioned. He discussed several cases in his Court. His principal comments, however, were about people he had known or with whom he currently worked. His comments were astonishingly frank and fascinating. Among those people were President Wilson ("he always planned to get us into war"); Harold Ickes ("he rewrote his 'secret' diaries three times"); President Roosevelt and "the young Schlesinger" (Roosevelt and other presidents do not have as much political power as "the enthusiastic historians say"); the early days of the National Labor Relations Board and members of it; President Eisenhower; Chief Justice Earl Warren ("no Lochinvar came from the West and wooed me"); Justice Stanley Reed (he did not comment on his or Reed's character evidence testimony for Alger Hiss); Dean Landis; Tommy Corcoran; Henry Stimson ("a very able man, a mentor, a severe patrician"); Prof. Paul Freund; Attorney General Biddle; and John W. Davis and Dean Acheson as counsel in his Court (Davis and Acheson "were outstanding because their learning and culture greatly strengthened their legal arguments").

When discussing people he liked, he described their admirable traits, abilities, and personalities. If he disliked a person, he did not mutter darkly. With the exception of two, he forcefully explained his disapproval.

I said to Judge Burger that Justice Frankfurter identified two people as the worst human beings he had ever known. He despised them. His words were scathing, searing, and expressed with unbridled hatred. He said that they were without any redeeming value. They were corrupt, evil, and utterly despicable individuals.

Frankfurter said they were Joseph P. Kennedy and William O. Douglas. Without vulgarity, he expressed his loathing in the strongest possible terms. He said they deserved the intense hatred he expressed.

As Frankfurter canvassed the field of famous acquaintances, and people for whom he had worked or who had exercised substantial influence on his life, including several justices then on the Supreme Court or who had served with him at an earlier time, he offered pointed approval or criticism, but not of Joseph P. Kennedy or William O. Douglas. About them, he offered sulfurous conclusions: They should never have been born, and "there is a special place in Hell they will occupy."

I said I was stunned by Frankfurter's unreserved comments. In such a setting, no person I knew had spoken as strongly and severely as Frankfurter. Judge Burger did not comment about Frankfurter's opinions of Kennedy and Douglas.

He asked me if he spoke about Justice Brennan. I said he did. Frankfurter had said that Brennan approached law as if it were a union-hall election. He simply counted votes, and this forced him into "wooden logic and brittle thought." He said Brennan did not learn from his previous appellate-court experience and added nothing to the Supreme Court.

Judge Burger asked if I knew why he was appointed. I knew that Eisenhower appointed Brennan in 1956 to replace Justice Minton, but nothing more.

Judge Burger replied that Brennan was appointed because, during the election of 1956, Eisenhower wanted to appoint an Irish Roman Catholic to the Supreme Court. "Your judge, Judge Danaher, was selected for the appointment," he said. In a few days, the announcement was to be made. Then, "the New Yorkers and the Rockefeller crowd" learned about his anticipated appointment. They were determined—desperately so—to stop it. Herb Brownell, the attorney general, was their point man. He moved Heaven and Earth to stop it.

He said that this was when Brennan entered the picture. He recalled that neither Brownell nor Eisenhower knew anything about him, but Brennan delivered an address that was written or crafted by the chief justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court. Apparently, he had become sick, could not deliver the address, and asked Brennan to deliver it for him. The newspaper gave Brennan credit for the address. Brownell, or one of his aides, read about it. Based on that, Brennan

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seemed reasonable enough, and he was a Roman Catholic and Irish. Brownell and the New Yorkers insisted that his name be put forward as a substitute for Judge Danaher.

Judge Burger knew this because he was in the White House and heard the discussions among Brownell, Eisenhower, and other members of the White House staff.

"Why did they dislike Judge Danaher so much?" I asked.

Judge Burger answered, "Danaher was a Taft man, one of his most trusted colleagues in the Senate and throughout the years. In the Republican Convention of 1952, he was a Taft man." He was among Eisenhower's first appointments to a federal appellate court, but the "New York crowd was determined that a Taft man would not be appointed to the Supreme Court or to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit."

They succeeded, and he said he would not be surprised if Frankfurter knew why Brennan was placed on the Supreme Court.

My attention returned to the graduation ceremony. After the president of Georgetown University or the Law School's dean conferred an honorary degree on Justice Brennan, he turned to Judge Danaher and began to read a history of his achievements.

In addition to what the honorary degree stated, he was a member of the outstanding Danaher family of Connecticut, a U.S. senator from Connecticut between 1939 and 1945, and an influential member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during World War II (when it was a great committee because it understood great responsibilities). He had significant visits with Winston Churchill at the British Embassy in Washington. He was a passionate Christian, an outstanding conservative, a senatorial colleague, and a strong personal and professional friend of Sen. Robert A. Taft.

He was a senator who cared deeply about his state and its citizens, including several families of Jews who arrived safely in Connecticut after Senator Danaher interceded with the German ambassador to the United States before December 1941 for their release from the Third Reich. Over 20 years later, when a member of one of those families died, he received letters thanking him for the full and happy life that the deceased had lived in Connecticut. In 1943, as a senator, he asked about the nature of American political policy toward the Soviet Union and what it would be if the Soviets attempted to enter deeply into Eastern Europe as a result of the war.

As a Supreme Court justice, he would have prevented the ravages and devastation that constitutional law and, more generally, federal law began to experience in the late 1950's.

In those days, there really were such men. He was not appointed to the Supreme Court, but Judge John A. Danaher was such a man. When he died, Chief Justice Warren E. Burger's remarks reflected on the sterling qualities in Judge Danaher's life and career. On that bright afternoon in 1979, so did his honorary degree from Georgetown University.

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POLITICS

Defining Natural Law Down

by Gladden J. Pappin

President George W. Bush has long been known as a neoconservative, but only recently has he picked up the appellation neo-Thomist. It is, admittedly, not the first term one would choose to describe a man whose speeches are filled with visions of Wilsonian grandeur. Writing in the January 31 *Weekly Standard*, however, Joseph Bottum argues that the President's Second Inaugural Address was a *tour de force* of Thomistic natural-law reasoning. "I'd guess not a lot of gloating is allowed around the throne of the Maker of heaven and earth," he explains, "but somewhere in the vicinity, St. Thomas Aquinas must be smiling." After a wait of more than seven centuries, Saint Thomas's thought has finally gone mainstream, in the militant democratism of the younger Bush.

What Bottum finds so attractive in Bush's Second Inaugural is the President's attempt to ground American foreign policy—"with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world"—in the longing of human nature and the eternal will of God. According to Bottum, the President's reasoning "is always the logical progression of the natural-law argument." Bush appeals to the "call of freedom" that "comes to every mind and every soul" and, thus, establishes a fixed human nature from which to draw his political conclusions. When Bush says that "history also has a visible direction, set by liberty and the Author of Liberty," Bottum sees the "intelligible formal causes" of natural-law analysis, and even Saint Thomas's divine Prime Mover. For Bottum, there "isn't much more a natural-law philosopher could want."

Yet, beyond an appeal to universal human nature—especially to the universal desire for freedom—Bush has little in common with the natural-law tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas. Nowhere has natural-law philosophy ever proposed the democratic crusading Bush seems to crave. For the President, it is the "untamed fire of freedom," a feeling welling up within man, that inspires his political vision. For the tradition of natural law, it is nature that imposes upon men a moral obligation to act in accordance with nature. To the extent that liberty or freedom helps him pursue this end, either may be a political good. But only with an eye to man's enjoyment of the virtuous life—here on earth and, ultimately, in the next world—has the philosophy of natural law begun to pronounce, with prudence, on political issues.

Granting for the moment Bottum's claim that Bush delivered "the most purely philosophical address in the history of America's inaugurations," we are entitled to wonder why the speech barely mentioned law at all. "Freedom," the President admitted, must be "sustained by the rule of law and the protection of minorities." No doubt has ever crossed the President's mind that *freedom*, the choicest good America has to offer, will be what he spreads abroad. As Bush has always portrayed it, modern freedom is an essential good. Even in his First Inaugural Address, he named "democratic faith" the very "creed of our country"—and, more than our creed, "the inborn hope of our humanity." The abstractions of democracy and liberty have come to govern the President's vision of the world more than any acknowledgment of the need for natural law. For Bush, the "rule of law" is nothing other than the legal structures that ensure personal freedom. When Bottum concludes that the President "carries natural law out to the world," he has committed a misnomer that would likely surprise the President himself; for what Bush

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wishes to spread abroad is far from the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas.

If Saint Thomas gives much heed to political matters from his heavenly perch, he must notice that Bush has replaced "the good" with liberty as that which all men seek. When the classical philosophers observed men's actions, they saw men—even in sinful actions—tending toward one or another vision of what is good. Natural-law philosophy has consequently tried to discover the objective good that man ought to seek among the misidentified, even unnatural, "goods" he does seek. That is, in fact, natural law's first precept. In Aquinas's reasoning, it follows that, in politics, men and societies at large ought to seek the good. Though the classical philosophers acknowledged the necessity of free will for moral action, they did not see political liberty as the basic good of human society, much less the chief force appointed by God to direct human history.

By contrast, the President thinks—if the idea makes sense—that man chooses everything under the aspect of liberty, for liberty itself is "the permanent hope of mankind." "Men and women in every culture," he said in 2003, "need liberty like they need food and water and air." If so, it is quite a wonder that civilization has lasted so long. Of course, no politician has ever claimed to be, of all things, *against liberty*, but it will be another task to sell the Islamic world on the idea that Wal-Mart, abortion, and pornography are among the essential goods toward which all human history is tending. Noble statements that the world is "moving toward liberty" might sound as if Bush has an Aristotelian idea of formal causes; at most, he has a few of the requirements of clear thinking injected with a heavy dose of faith in liberal democracy. As Charles Kesler says in the *Claremont Review of Books*, "many people everywhere and at all times have been quite happy to enjoy their freedom and all the benefits of someone else's slavery." The idea that men everywhere seek full political freedom, even Bush's allies acknowledge, has no foundation in the natural-law tradition. Indeed, it is without foundation at all.

In the President's minimal emphasis on the good, and in his wild faith in the inevitable conquest of modern liberty, his differences with the Thomistic tradition become most obvious. For Saint Thomas as for Aristotle, the purpose of civil society is the good life—the life according to virtue. While the modern state secures men's liberty by keeping them from harming one another, it satisfies only the least requirement laid out by Saint Thomas for social life. "Every law is ordained to the common good," Aquinas writes, but the common good entails more than simply the freedom to act as one wants (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II.90.2). So closely does Aquinas identify the common good with virtuous living that he says a king "should order those things which lead to heavenly beatitude and prohibit, as far as possible, their contraries" (*On Kingship*, I.15). Eyeing the common good himself, President Bush claims American freedom is "ennobled by service, and mercy, and . . . does not mean independence from one another." But since his primary concern is the expansion of personal freedom, he can, at most, *exhort* men to do what is right. Even then, a political philosophy seeking above all to secure the freedom of choice has little to say about the moral worth of the choice itself. Yet it was moral goodness that Saint Thomas's natural-law philosophy kept at its center.

It is perhaps reassuring that George W. Bush is not the first partisan of democracy and total liberty to be identified with classical natural law. In the early 20th-century revival of Thomistic thought, certain American Thomists thought they saw in Saint Thomas the principles of American democracy. America's democratic messianism has always had a peculiar way of rubbing off on her citizens—vindicating, most unintentionally, Aristotle's observations on the way a regime shapes its citizens. Perhaps the most extreme example of this is *St. Thomas' Political Doctrine and Democracy*, written in 1921 by Fr. Edward F. Murphy. Murphy euphorically locates the basis of American democracy in Saint Thomas, claiming (incorrectly) that Thomas identified the people as the source of political power and authority. The Cross, Murphy concluded, was "the truest emblem of democracy"; Christ, "the supernal and supreme democrat of history." We can be thankful that our own President has not lost all sense of propriety.

To join George W. Bush and Thomas Aquinas is, of course, more amusing than it is harmful. The thought of the good saint's praising America for her foundation in "the truths of Sinai, the Sermon on the Mount, the words of the Koran, and the varied faiths of our people" is surely enough to make the Angelic Doctor himself chuckle—if, that is, one is free to laugh around the throne of the Author of Liberty. A saint who thought it acceptable to mete out capital punishment to religious dissenters now sits at the same table with G.W.F. Hegel and Francis Fukuyama, lauding "liberty" as the formal cause of history's movement. Little did he know, when he characterized sin as slavery rather than liberty, that his name would lately come down wholly on the side of the latter. Surely Pope Leo XIII himself, who complained that, in the modern age, "liberty is running into license," would have thought twice about encouraging the study of Saint Thomas, had he known the direction in which, on a cold day this past January, it would end.

The teaching of Saint Thomas has found itself pressed into many a cause, and we would waste our energies in simply regretting its latest incarnation as the political philosophy of George W. Bush. What is rather more regrettable is how natural law has been defined down as the neoconservative movement has progressed. Jody Bottum's claim of harmony between Bush and Aquinas has largely been accepted as fact—when even a conservative with no knowledge of Thomas Aquinas should be skeptical of the claim. When "conservatism" has gone so far as to embrace the unmitigated and imprudent imposition of American liberty on the most alien of cultures—with little or no justification in our self-defense—we know that it has left behind its intellectual moorings in the natural-law tradition.

Gladden J. Pappin writes from North Carolina.

Elizabeth Wolf

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by George McCartney

Empty Gestures

Sin City

Produced by Dimension Films
Directed by Robert Rodriguez and Frank Miller
Written by Frank Miller
Distributed by Dimension Films and Miramax Films

So you have been wondering what happened to Frodo, a.k.a. Elijah Wood, after he drifted off into that glorious sunset at the end of *The Return of the King*? It seems he didn't go on to the next world after all. Instead, he hired on with director Robert Rodriguez and sank into *Sin City*. There, he took up killing women so he could cannibalize their bodies and mount their heads on his trophy wall. Don't worry, though—he paid for his excesses. Someone named Marv lopped off his arms and legs and then fed his still-breathing torso to the dogs. In Marv's inimitable words, he was given "the hard goodbye."

You can see all this and much, much more in Rodriguez's *Sin City*, a film many of our toniest movie reviewers have hailed as the biggest aesthetic breakthrough since Quentin Tarantino's bloodfest *Kill Bill*. As for me, I know trash when I see it, so be warned. I feel no obligation to protect this project's cheesy secrets. If you're hellbent on seeing the movie for yourself, please read no further.

Rodriguez's *Sin City* is little more than a grotesque postmodern stunt. He pretends to be distilling film *noir* down to its irreducibly bitter essence with the aid of Frank Miller's loathsome comic books—excuse me, graphic novels—bearing the same hackneyed title. (Do you know of any urban center that's not been called sin city?) The film, which Miller helped Rodriguez direct, is obnoxious on two counts. First, it trades in graphic portrayals of *outré* violence, including mutilation, beheading, castration, cannibalism, and murderous pedophilia, all of which are ultimately laid—are you ready for this?—at the feet of a corrupt Roman Catholic cardinal, a gray eminence who distantly presides over this urban cesspool. How's that for snazzy topicality? Second, Rodriguez cynically travesties film *noir*, one of America's more authentic traditions. To round out his efforts, he has employed the master of the postmodern sneer, Tarantino himself, to direct one of the film's more rancid segments involving a decapitated head that refuses to shut up. Rodriguez's earlier films—*Once Upon a Time in Mexico*, *Spy Kids*, *From Dusk Till Dawn*—were childish reworkings of action-movie clichés. Now, under the influence of Miller's garish vision and Tarantino's crud-loving sensibility, he has traded in his former juvenile energy for a shallow and sickly sophistication. This is all the more disappointing because the look of his film is often genuinely riveting.

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Movie Reviews Online
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Rodriguez has spared no effort to dazzle his audience with some of the most compelling cinematography I've seen this year. His film is steeped in a stygian black-and-white scheme punctuated by occasional bursts of incandescent color. A woman named Goldie (Jaime King) is just that, from her blonde hair to her tawny, translucent skin. A saturnine hero shows he means business by driving about in a liquid-red Cadillac. After being savagely beaten, a wealthy villain's white skin takes on an ochre patina like that of a weathered medallion. And then there's the mayhem, during which people bleed in several hues and shades—principally red and white.

This color-coding strategy is, of course, not new. John Huston shot his adaptation of Carson McCullers' *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1967) in color and then had the film processed into a sepia tint that momentarily winked into crimson when the camera glanced at anything red. This was meant to convey the stifled passion among officers and their wives living on a Southern Army base. In his black-and-white *Schindler's List* (1993), Steven Spielberg used color to drive home the terrible poignancy of Jews being rounded up by Nazis in occupied Poland. In a sea of grim black-and-white figures, a little girl briefly appears wearing a red coat, until the colorless darkness of the surrounding crowd drowns her image from the screen. Rodriguez's use of color has no such dramatic purpose. It is as weightlessly decorative as the blue tinting in a black-and-white American Express television commercial. At one point, gold and red salaciously emphasize the aforementioned Goldie's naked body; at another, red and white give color, shall we say, to the gobs of gore gushing from the neck of a decapitated miscreant. This is heartless showmanship. However brilliantly executed, it is quite meaningless beyond the momentary sensations it creates.

As for the film's story line, I'm told that it is quite faithful to Miller's narratives, in which the sinful city is as much a character as its denizens. But this is no recommendation. The comic-book world Miller has created with admittedly bravura draftsmanship is tiresomely puerile and repellently perverse. Miller claims to have been influenced by Raymond Chandler, among other practitioners of the hard-boiled school, and you can detect this influence in his dim attempt to inject his stories with a note of chivalry. His half-witted steroidal heroes are obsessively driven to defend, save, or revenge wronged women. Curiously, these distressed damsels are invariably sluts (if not prostitutes) who just happen to look like goddesses in their negligee-like apparel and not-infrequent nudity. Miller's tales, however, have nothing of Chandler's ironic regret for lost virtue. In *The Big Sleep*, Philip Marlowe is bemused by his innate chivalric impulses. He knows perfectly well how severely discounted such feelings have become in the 20th century. At the same time, he refuses to

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abandon his knightly code, because it is his only chance for self-respect in a morally polluted world. Miller and Rodriguez are deaf to Chandler's ambiguities. They are not even working at the low level of Mickey Spillane and Jim Thompson. They have processed pulp into a putrid pabulum. If romance novels appeal to feminine fantasies of being helplessly borne away in the bulging arms of irresistibly virile suitors, Miller and Rodriguez appeal to a certain type of demented 14-year-old boy harboring a cretinous desire for women who conveniently blend the best attributes of madonna and whore. This is not art of any kind; it is just pandering. And since they have unquestionably designed their film for adolescents, it is pandering of the vilest kind.

To put Miller's "vision" across, Rodriguez has chosen three principals, each with his own story of heroic travail. The first is detective Hartigan (Bruce Willis), whom we meet as he closes in on a well-born pedophile who is absconding with an 11-year-old girl. Hartigan pursues this creep tenaciously, despite warnings that it is useless since the fiend is protected by his senator father, the cardinal's brother no less. Furthermore, the aging Hartigan, who is just hours away from retirement, suffers from severe angina. As his partner remarks, "You're pushing sixty; you're not saving anyone." Sound familiar? This is postmodernist mockery: Recycle society's hoariest clichés to expose the retread nature of its exhausted values.

Next is Marv, played by Mickey Rourke, rendered unrecognizable by a prosthetically disfigured face. In keeping with Miller's chivalric theme, his features seem to have fused metallically into a medieval helmet complete with visor. He is on a mission to revenge Goldie's murder. In his search for her killer, Marv goes to Confession to a priest who knows the fellow's location. (Apparently, he is in contact with the cardinal, but who knows.) Unfortunately, after his revelation, the priest raises an ill-advised question: "Ask yourself if that corpse of a slut is worth dying for." Marv repays this sensible counsel by unceremoniously shooting the padre, another nice Catholic touch.

Last, there's Dwight (Clive Owen), who hangs out with a cadre of homicidal prostitutes in Old Town, the city's center in which the well-armed ladies pursue their trade, enforcing grisly retribution on males who dare step out of line. Despite their evident martial resources, Dwight feels compelled to protect the damsels when they are troubled by a corrupt cop. On his way to a showdown, he talks to himself in voice-over, making such *faux-noir* observations as: "It's time to prove to your friends that you're worth a damn. Sometimes that means dying, sometimes it means killing a whole lot of people." Indeed. Not to mention cutting up the resulting corpses so they will fit into the trunk of your car.

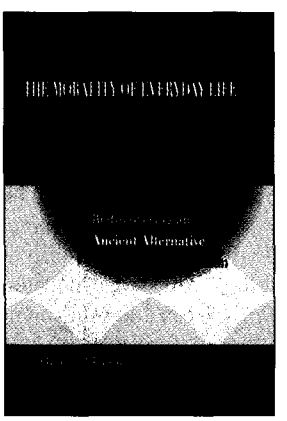
Rodriguez exposes the emptiness of his *noir* flourishes by opening and closing his epic with a steal from Billy Wilder's *Double Indemnity* (1944). A nameless man appears on a balcony and approaches an equally unidentified woman in a blood-red dress. They tenderly embrace, and, as they do, he shoots her in the stomach. This reenacts the fatal embrace between Barbara Stanwyck and Fred MacMurray near the close of *Double Indemnity*. In Wilder's film, however, this scene is the fitting culmination of the couple's greed and lust. Instead of life, their sexual union engenders death. This gives the scene genuine moral consequence. Rodriguez merely steals the deadly glamour and ignores its human relevance. Like everything else in his film, it is a cruelly spectacular but morally vacuous gesture. ©

The Morality of Everyday Life:
Rediscovering an Ancient Alternative to the Liberal Tradition

by Thomas Fleming

What passes for conservatism today is really nothing more than the impossible moral and social theories of the Renaissance and Enlightenment, in which universal abstractions, such as democracy and equality, are presented as hard truths, when, in fact, they have never existed in any society in human history. Nonetheless, they are to be applied worldwide, at the tip of a spear (or cruise missile) if necessary.

Dr. Fleming's alternative is rooted in "everyday life," the local realities of blood and soil, custom and tradition, friendship and faith, and in the wisdom born of the experiences these realities beget. This wisdom finds expression in folktales and fables, in ancient Hebrew Scriptures and Greek philosophy, and in medieval casuistry. It is the method to solving ethical problems great and small, and it is the method that undergirds authentic conservatism.



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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

The Most Patriotic Conservative

I first encountered the name Samuel T. Francis in 1984, when Joe Sobran thrust a nondescript-looking little book, published in typically amateurish format by the University Press of America, into my hands and asked my permission to review it. (I was, in those days, the literary editor for *National Review*.) Its title was *Power and History: The Political Thought of James Burnham*. In 1984, Burnham, though still identified on NR's masthead as senior editor, had been mentally incapacitated for seven years by stroke. Jim Burnham, of course, had served as *National Review*'s chief international-affairs analyst and foreign-policy theorist since the magazine's launch in 1955. Like all of Jim's colleagues at NR, I was in awe of Burnham and, thus, predisposed toward anyone who had taken the time and the effort to write a book about the fading lion in Kent, Connecticut, whose name even then was in process of being forgotten (though his ideas were being rediscovered by President Reagan's neoconservative appointees in Washington, mostly for the purpose of mangling or misapplying them). I never suspected, as I handed *Power and History* back to Joe, or later, when I read the review of it he had written, that the author would become as great a theoretical student of American politics as James Burnham was of the international political arena—perhaps even greater.

I no longer recall my first meeting with Sam, though most likely it occurred in November 1989, at the *Chronicles* editorial-board meeting that either preceded or succeeded the awards ceremony sponsored by the Ingersoll Foundation and held in Chicago every fall. Despite—I feel certain he would have said, *owing to*—his quintessentially American character, Sam, with his then-rotundity bulging from his outgrown suit, china-blue eyes staring from behind owlish eyeglasses, red face, and straight hair flopping over his forehead, struck me as very English—a grown-up Billy Bunter, though one who would have known how to put a chap like Harry Flashman in his place (perhaps by telling him what a jolly place Afghanistan was, all the lovely native women and so forth, and encouraging him to arrange for the British Empire to send him there). In those bygone days, the Rockford brass were sumptuously lodged for the Ingersoll blowout at the Drake Hotel on Michigan Avenue, while the junior staff were billeted at the Allerton five or six blocks south—cab fare not provided. "I—ah—I'm not going to *walk* there," I remember Sam protesting, high in dudgeon, when we were gathered in the lobby for the hike north to the Drake. (Whether he submitted the taxi receipt for reimbursement is a thing known only to God, Tom Fleming, and the Ingersoll Foundation, possibly in that order.)

Living as I have lived in the backwoods of Wyoming for the past quarter-century, I got to know Sam Francis only gradually and at a distance. As the assigning and copy editor responsible for his numerous and lengthy reviews, however, we had ample cause for regular editorial confabulations by telephone—conferences that, in time, evolved into conversations ranging far from simple editorial concerns until, if Sam had no copy pending with my department and therefore hadn't heard from me for a couple of weeks or so, I'd receive a call from him, usually after 10 P.M., Washington time. "Hello, Chilton?—this is Sam Francis. Ah—could you call me back?" And always, after a delay of two or three minutes, during which I went to the dining room for a glass of red wine and returned with it to my study phone, I called him. Bachelors, anywhere, lead lonely lives. Bachelors living in remote places and among remote people live, perhaps, lonelier lives still. Sam remained a bachelor all his life. I was one for 11 years before I remarried. The telephone, unlike the internet, is a great consolation to people in such circumstances. The Thursday before the onset of his final illness, I phoned Sam at home, found him out, and left a message on his machine. The next evening, I called again, and we had our last conversation. Though seemingly pleased to hear my voice, he was not himself, had uncharacteristically little to say, and rang off early, explaining that he felt tired and had been going to bed early of late. That was eight weeks ago as I write. I don't believe an evening has passed since then that, glancing through my study door at my office chair and writing desk with the telephone resting on the corner, it hasn't struck home with dismaying finality that Sam Francis is no longer ten touch-tones away—and never will be again.

We talked, usually, about politics, perhaps especially literary politics. I cannot recall ever having had an argument with him, much less hard words. Our views of history, of the world situation and that of the United States, and our expectations for the future were mainly congruent, with three exceptions.

Sam Francis, though he hailed from Tennessee, lived most of his life in Washington, D.C., where, so far as I am aware, his friends and acquaintances were chiefly intellectual and political sophisticates like himself. Having lived half a lifetime now among precisely the class of people Sam Francis argued had radical-conservative potential but whom I know as apolitical and socially libertarian types, saturated and numbed by the opiate of the lower-middle classes, which is affluence and the carelessness affluence makes possible (in the short run), I was—and remain—skeptical of Francis & Warren theorizing about the strategic potential inherent in their "Middle American Radicals." Though I have made the objection repeatedly and in writing over the years, and in venues where Sam could hardly have missed seeing it, we never discussed the matter in the course of a friendship lasting a decade and a half—not even when I restated my dissent in my chapter on *Revolt From the Middle* in *The Conservative Bookshelf*, which Sam professed to appreciate. (The reason, I think, is that, well before the time of his death, Sam had pretty much ceased to believe himself in MAR's as a political solution to the American social and political crisis. Indeed, he once remarked that the ideas supporting

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the Old Republic—a term he came to dislike and was planning to retire from his vocabulary in the future—were "dead.")

Another subject I do not remember entering our conversations is the business of the application of scientific methods for the purpose of identifying genetic inequalities between the races, especially those that determine intelligence or IQ—though, of course, as latter-day Americans, we discussed racial politics constantly—and applying the resultant findings to political and social programs. It is possible that Sam assumed that I, as a Catholic, was universalist enough in my thinking to disapprove of such studies, and so avoided the subject altogether.

My conviction, nevertheless, is that Sam Francis' interest in racial anthropology loomed far less large in his thinking than some of his friends—and all of his enemies, nearly to a man—believed. While he certainly was not shy about the subject, nothing, either in his writings or in his conversation, ever indicated to me an obsession with "race." Sam was a consummate humanist, not an amateur scientist. As a humanist, he understood, I believe, that science, far from illuminating social, cultural, and political questions, instead quickmarches them into the realm of infernal darkness. We are dealing with two discrete modes of knowledge here. Sam, as a trained historian, knew this; so did his intellectual mentor, James Burnham. (Neither man ever wrote a single line of scientese in the course of his entire career.) Although on occasion—goaded by bullying, hypocritical, one-way racial politics into what some people would consider an indiscretion—he made rather too imprecise (and wholly unscientific) reference to "the white race," Sam Francis understood perfectly well that the contemporary issue is between civilization and barbarism, not colored *versus* white; lofty tradition *versus* meritocratic economism; freedom *versus* tyranny; ordered liberty *versus* anarchism; cogent thought *versus* mental reflex. If the historical tally credits—as assuredly it does—more civilizations to the column headed "white race" (meaning, substantially, the European peoples) and fewer to that headed "nonwhite," then how (he could have reasoned) is Samuel Francis to blame for that fact?

When Francis remarked, in the course of the now-infamous talk delivered at an American Renaissance conference that got him fired from his editorial job at the *Washington Times*, that Western civilization could have been created only by "white" Europeans, he was only speaking the truth. At the very least, he was stating the sole conclusion *for which any empirical evidence exists at all.* I say "empirical" because—again—the statement, of course, is entirely an ascientific one. In any event, the notion that, for Samuel Francis, the intrinsic worth of a human being—white, black, red, yellow, or blue—is determinable by his IQ is vitiated by his contempt for the meritocracy (in Sam's term, "the elites") whom he condemned, finally, for *their* contempt for ordinary, undistinguished, workaday people struggling to make a living—and a life—in the American heartland. Sam Francis was indeed proud of the civilization his ancestors created, but not from any assurance that its builders represented an intellectual and cultural super-race. Rather, he loved, was proud of, and defended the West and the Old America for the simple, wholesome, and human reason that they were *his*: his civilization, his people, his legacy. Had Francis been born among the Zulus in the 17th century, he would have opposed the Boer invasion just as staunchly, and for precisely the same reasons, as he opposed the Mexican onslaught against the United States in his lifetime.

A month, perhaps two, before his death, religion entered into Sam's and my conversation, and for the first time. While I do not believe that we had, up until then, deliberately avoided the subject, no doubt a mutual sense of tact led us, perhaps unconsciously, to avoid it. Sam was aware, of course, of my conversion to the Catholic Church in 1992. For my part, I was aware that Sam, while not hostile to Christianity, was suspicious nevertheless of its universalistic sympathies and commitments. The context of our rather brief discussion was Irish immigration in the mid-19th century. I—humorously—quoted my late father-in-law, Neil McCaffrey, as saying—also humorously—that, if he'd been an American Protestant of that period, he wouldn't have wanted to let the Irish in, either. Sam, after producing his gravelly appreciative chuckle, went on to say that he, personally, had no problem with the Irish in America. He added, delicately, that "the religion doesn't quite fit our political system." I admitted to him that it doesn't—forbearing to remark that, in my opinion, the United States would have a stronger and more coherent history had it been founded by Catholics rather than by Protestants. The truth is, I often felt self-conscious about my religion in Sam's presence—not, I hope, from weakness in faith but because, for a former WASP descended from a long line of WASP's, his reservations and suspicions regarding Church doctrine and Catholic culture resonated empathetically, as echoes from another life. Yet, whatever Sam's frank opinion of Romanism and Romanists may have been, I always felt that he respected, if not my Faith, then my conversion and continued commitment to It—and that he wished to communicate to me that respect. However fierce he could be in print, in his personal relations, Sam Francis was never a man to wound but rather to lave in the warmth of his gruff affability.

As an expression, perhaps, of his British genes, Sam possessed that wideness of spirit and essential humility once characteristic of Fleet Street journalists, who, after savaging the opposition all day, met with their opponents at the Cheshire Cheese after hours for steak-and-kidney pie and ale. This quality, compounded in equal parts of gentility and chivalry, was something his enemies never comprehended in their nemesis. According to Peter Brimelow, Sam was genuinely hurt by the insults and slanders hurled at him by his detractors. While it is hard to imagine him losing sleep over a particularly nasty paragraph by David Frum, David Brock, or John Miller, Sam was sensitive to the fact that his motives as a writer were misunderstood, while his gifts as a political commentator and theorist were vastly underappreciated. Sam was well aware that his professional reputation never came close to matching his deserts, and that his importance as an interpreter of his times was being systematically denied. The broader reasons for this neglect are the cowardice, mendacity, and carelessness of his age, reflected in the unworthiness of his viciously small-minded (often youthful) opponents.

It may be these men believe that, with Sam Francis gone to his untimely death at the age of 57, they have triumphed over the monster at last. Certainly, the conclusion seems wholly appropriate to their shallow triumphalist minds. With equal certainty, we may predict that it will not occur to them to reflect, a generation hence, that the chaotic anarcho-tyranny they witness around them was predicted, years ago, by the great American patriot and wisest of men they so enthusiastically reprobated and deplored. ◁

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by Humpty Dumpty

International Community

In April, Condoleezza Rice made a stunning display of her keen analytical mind and verbal agility. During a joint press conference with the Hungarian foreign minister, the secretary of state found herself defending the Bush administration's decision to abstain rather than veto a U.N. resolution turning over crimes committed in the Darfur region of the Sudan to the International Criminal Court, even though the administration supposedly opposes the ICC. When some malicious wag pointed out that neither the United States nor Sudan are parties to the treaty that created the ICC, Rice replied: "It is important to uphold the principle that non-parties to a treaty are indeed nonparties to a treaty. But the international community has to act on Darfur." I'm surprised she did not pull out the familiar "We cannot stand idly by."

Muslims have been killing Christians in southern Sudan for decades, but the United States has taken little interest. There are some Christians in Darfur, though they are mostly refugees. All this time that Christians have been the object of a genocidal slaughter in Africa—subsidized, in part, by Saudis—the United States has done nothing; when the occasion arises for beefing up the "international community," however, we let nothing stand in our way.

Secretary Rice recently exposed her mastery of Russian to the world in an interview in which she could neither understand questions nor speak correct Russian, but she appears to be a master of the doublespeak clichés in which all American policies are framed. Nonparties are nonparties, she concedes, except when the United States wants something done. Then it is up to "the international community."

International community is an interesting phrase. There was a time when it meant something, though not very much, namely, the group of foreigners in a city who, as strangers in a strange land, tended to spend time with one another and exchange favors. At some point, the world-controllers picked up the phrase and used it as the New World Order equivalent of *people*, as in "What would *people* say if they found out you didn't change your socks every day?"

As conventional shorthand for the tyranny of public opinion, *people* is a useful term to lay down the law to all persons who are definitely non-people. The *international community* has a similar function in dictating terms to all the "lesser breeds without the Law," who have the bad taste and worse judgment to think they can manage their own affairs without the intervention of the United States and her surrogates—NATO, the World Bank, transnational corporations, and the United Nations—that make this the greatest empire (at least *de facto*) in the history of the world.

I watched this verbal bullying from almost the beginning of the break-up of Yugoslavia, as this so-called international community pursued a one-sided policy, supporting every group against the Serbs. But the IC has also mustered its forces in favor of birth control and women's liberation and against religion (especially Christianity) and patriotism.

The phrase is useful because it literally means nothing. A community, after all, consists of people who live together and share experiences, as in a family or village. Although we sometimes use *community* as a vague synonym for *society*, the two words have rather different origins and meanings. A society (from the Latin *socius*, ally or comrade) is a group of men and women who have banded together for a specific purpose, whether to promote German band music or to discuss conservative ideology.

A community, by contrast, is defined by sharing, by having things in common (*communis*). When anthropologists speak of face-to-face communities or, to use the language of James Redfield's still memorable book, *The Little Community*, they are describing people living in one place, tied together by common history and usually by common blood. While members of a society (a hunting band, football team, or real-estate company) judge one another by their contribution to the group—honoring the best shot, the longest throw, the highest sales—members of a community are largely stuck with one another. You may not expel your double second cousin from the village simply because he is dead weight on the community any more than you may disown your son simply because he does not live up to the family's standard of high marks in school and high earnings on the job.

When, some years ago, Mario Cuomo began ventilating his feelings about the "national family," few Republicans were astute enough to see the implications. Families are inherently socialist, accepting and nonjudgmental, and a great nation-state that treated its citizens as one big happy family would be more like Pol Pot's Cambodian nightmare than like anything the Framers of the Constitution imagined.

And, just as there can be no national family, except in the fictions promoted by totalitarian states, so there can be no international community unless we subscribe to a conspiracy theory and believe that 20 to 30 people are meeting on a regular basis to plot the takeover of the world. Of course, they would like to, but there is nothing to prevent conspirators from conspiring against one another, hence the two-party system or the little tiffs between Jacques Chirac and George W. Bush. Nonetheless, the fiction of the international community is a key to what is happening, because it implies that all the nations of the world are really one nation, and, thus, the differences that divide Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, and Albanians are as trivial as the histories of these people.

When Secretary Rice, echoing Secretary Albright and her cronies, invokes the language of the "international community," she is implicitly defending the leftist policy of globalism and international human rights. But then, that is why she is secretary of state for an administration that refuses to protect our borders, allies itself with Muslim terrorists around the globe—most recently, the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria—yet threatens to attack any nation that sins against the consensus of the international community.

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